



Skenes Creek | Kennett River | Wye River | Separation Creek

Neighbourhood Character Study

BACKGROUND REPORT | September 2005

PREPARED FOR COLAC OTWAY SHIRE

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Acknowledgments

Council Officers

The development of the Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study was guided by a number of Council officers throughout the project. The assistance of the following officers and of the Colac Otway Shire is gratefully acknowledged:

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Community Involvement

The contribution of numerous residents and home owners in the study areas to the study is gratefully acknowledged.

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Foreword

The brief for this Neighbourhood Character Study was to gather relevant data about the study areas, consult the local communities on the valued character of the townships, and develop neighbourhood character guidelines for the assessment of planning applications. The project also involved preparing recommendations so that the guidelines could be implemented through the Colac Otway Planning Scheme. The study involved surveying the residentially zoned areas of the townships, describing the characteristics through words and photographs, and producing guidelines, policies and controls to manage the unique character of the coastal towns.

This review sets out the means by which to protect and enhance the valued characteristics of the townships. The success of this review will require collective understanding and concerted action by the Council, local community and developers alike. We present this review as the vehicle for initiating protection, management and enhancement of neighbourhood character within these four coastal townships that contribute to the wider Great Ocean Road coastal area.

Lisa Riddle and Mike Scott
Planisphere
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1. Brief and Method

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1.1 Brief

Colac Otway Shire is committed to ensuring that the valued character of the townships of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek is retained and enhanced, and to using available tools within the Colac Otway Planning Scheme to assist in this aim. The Study area relates to the extent of the land within the Township zones of these townships. A copy of the Brief is contained in [Appendix 1](#).

The project is intended to complement the Apollo Bay/Marengo Neighbourhood Character Study, which was reviewed by Planisphere in November 2003. The review involved revising the content and the format of the character brochures, summarising community values, analysing existing policies, and recommending methods for implementation in the Planning Scheme. The Amendment to implement the recommendations of this study has been prepared and exhibited following advice from the DSE regarding content. The DSE concerns in relation to that proposed Amendment will be taken into account in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Character Study for the four townships, where it is within the scope of the brief.

The Council requested that the outputs of this project be consistent and compatible with the format and presentation of the reviewed Apollo Bay/Marengo Neighbourhood Character Study.

In addition the Council was concerned to ensure that the results of a mail survey previously sent to all land owners be incorporated within the study process. The questionnaire asked respondents:

- What they like and dislike about the design / style / era of housing in their street.
- What the minimum lot size should be in the town.
- Whether they would support height limits on all developments, and what that limit should be.
- Whether a planning permit should be required for all development in the town.
- Whether they would be interested in being further involved.

Summary tables had been prepared of the questionnaire responses, and these were made available to Planisphere.

1.2 Methodology

The Study proceeded through a simple sequence of tasks, in line with those contained in the Brief, starting with the survey and identification of the particular characteristics of the townships, confirmation of these at public meetings, and concluding with recommended changes to the Colac Otway Planning Scheme. A similar method, which was adapted for the Shire's needs, has been proven to work over more than twenty character studies in varying environments across Victoria. It dovetailed neatly with work recently completed by Planisphere on landscape assessment for the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy and the Apollo Bay Neighbourhood Character Study.

The core tasks of the Study were:

- Preliminaries
- Survey and Mapping
- Precinct Identification and Issues Papers
- Community Forums
- Policy and Guidelines
- Implementation Recommendations
- Planning Scheme Amendment Documentation
- Study Report
- Council Liaison

Preliminaries

- Assess background documents and policies.
- Finalise brief and prepare detailed time line.
- Meet with Council Officers to finalise the timeline and process.
- Analyse the responses to the questionnaire.

Survey and Mapping

This task established the framework for subsequent work, including identification of character precincts. The task involved:

- Refinement of detailed survey brief.
- Detailed street-by-street survey.
- Documentation of threats to existing character areas.
- Mapping of the main characteristics.

Every street was surveyed, and relevant information collected, mostly in map form, and aggregated to blocks or groups of properties with like characteristics. The amount and type of data collected was tailored to achieve the most effective result for the study areas. Data collected was aimed at determining the 'key' characteristics of areas, as opposed to a catalogue of unrelated or peripheral information. The main data collected has been mapped using MapInfo on GIS bases provided by the Council.

Precinct Identification and Issues Papers

In this stage we prepared and mapped draft Precinct boundaries for discussion with the Council and community at the first round of workshops. An Issues Paper was prepared for each Precinct to draw together the main features of each precinct, community values ascertained from the survey, broader planning issues, and threats to the character. Each Precinct Issues Paper included:

- Township Description
- Precinct Description
- Key Existing Characteristics
- Council Strategic Directions
- Existing Controls
- Development Activity / Pressures
- Community Values (from the questionnaire)
- Preferred Character Directions
- Draft Preferred Character Statement
- Precinct Map
- Photo Boards for each Precinct

The Preferred Character Statement was intended as a focus for discussion with the community. The Preferred Character of each area was described, as allowed for in ResCode. The technique for identifying the future character statement required examining options for each Precinct of:

- No change
- Strengthening/protecting certain elements
- Significant change to create a new character

Community input to these statements is of key importance to the success of the study. This statement also took account of other Council policies such as a housing strategy, built form or height controls, and vegetation, landscape or heritage controls.

Photo Boards and maps that illustrate the location and typical characteristics of the precinct accompany the Precinct Issues Papers. These are an invaluable tool in generating discussion amongst community members, and demonstrating the aim of the project.

Community Forums

The Brief suggested that at least two community forums should be held during the course of the Study; one in Colac Otway Shire and one in Melbourne. We proposed that two meetings should be held in both locations at key points in the process. The meetings in the Shire were held at the only available public venue – the Surf Life Saving Club at Wye River. The meetings in Melbourne were held in a central location in South Melbourne, regularly used for public meetings by the Shire, to enable holiday-home owners to contribute.

Given that the Council had previously conducted a questionnaire and the results had been collated, the first meetings in both locations were aimed at:

- presenting an outline of the study brief and process;
- reviewing the outcomes of questionnaire survey and refining the 'likes' and 'dislikes' about the character of each township;
- identifying a vision for the future character of each township; and.
- presenting the draft findings of the survey and identification of Precincts, through Precinct Issues Papers. These papers were presented at the meeting and supplied for written comment by participants.

The second round of consultation workshops reviewed the , draft Precinct Brochures, including draft Design Guidelines and preferred character statements. A preliminary investigation of implementation tools was also presented. Participants were also provided the opportunity to provide written comments after the workshop, or if unable to attend. Many property owners availed themselves of this opportunity.

Policy and Guidelines

The Design Guidelines were framed in direct response to any mismatch identified between the threats to a precinct's character and the preferred future character of each precinct. The detailed content included Design Guidelines for each precinct, addressing the following Character Elements where relevant to that precinct.

Examples of elements are:

- Landscape Setting
- Vegetation
- Building Form
- Siting
- Building Spacing
- Design Detail and Finishes
- Views
- Frontage Treatment
- Car Parking and Vehicular Access

For each Character Element, an *Objective*, *Design Response* and *Avoid* statement was prepared.

Implementation Recommendations

The best statutory implementation mechanisms have been developed in consultation with the Council, and where relevant, the Department of Sustainability and Environment. An important aspect of this task is to apply a *discriminating* approach to statutory implementation, one that considers the full statutory context, including the range of existing controls and the methods of ensuring that the effectiveness of all tools is maximised. As mentioned earlier, the outcomes on any discussions with the DSE about the proposed implementation of the Apollo Bay Neighbourhood Character Study will be taken into account in the preparation of recommendations for this Study, wherever possible.

We can also broadly address non-statutory mechanisms such as education and encouragement and, importantly, works by public authorities, in particular road and footpath treatments and street planting usually carried out by the Council.

Planning Scheme Amendment Documentation

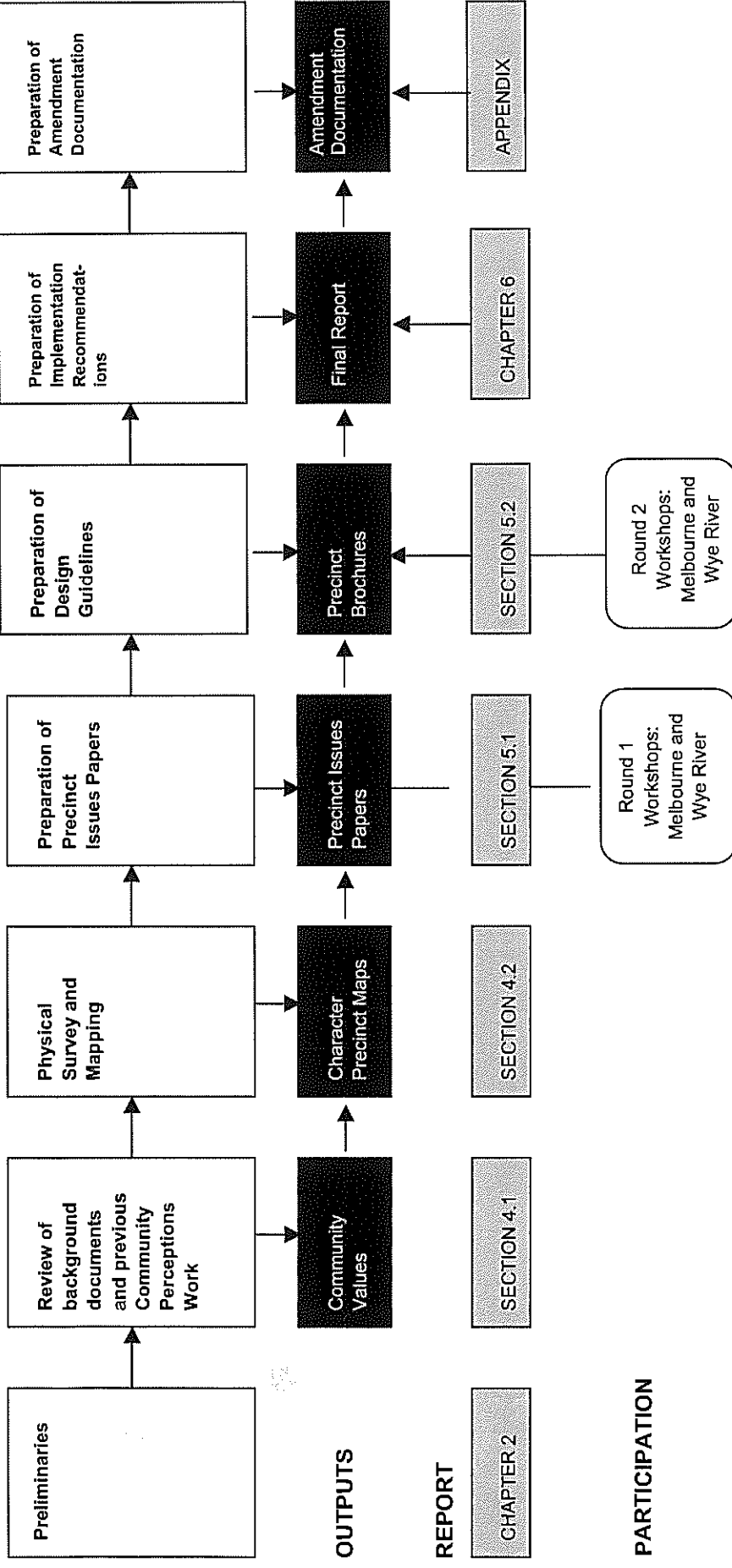
The Brief requires preparation of exhibition ready planning scheme documents. Draft documentation has been prepared for finalisation by the Council following adoption of the report recommendations. These documents include Local Policy and Overlay schedules, including extent of the Overlay, Explanatory Report, List of Changes and Notice of Amendment.

Council Liaison

Three meetings were held with Council officers during the course of the Study. Regular phone and email contact was maintained at all stages in the process.

Study Process Diagram

TASKS







2. Policy Context

2.1 State Policies

State Planning Policy Framework

The State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) comprises of a statement of general principles for land use and development planning, and specific policies dealing with sectoral issues. Planning and responsible authorities must take into account and give effect to both the general principles and the specific policies applicable to issues before them to ensure integrated decision-making.

In Clause 13 Settlement, the SPPF states the following issue as being of relevance to neighbourhood character:

Planning is to anticipate and respond to the needs of existing and future communities through provision of zoned and serviced land for housing, employment, recreation and open space, commercial and community facilities and infrastructure. Planning is to recognise the need for, and as far as practicable contribute towards:

- Health and safety.
- Diversity of choice.
- Adaptation in response to changing technology.
- Economic viability.
- A high standard of urban design and amenity.
- Energy efficiency.
- Prevention of pollution to land, water and air.
- Protection of environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources.
- Accessibility.
- Land use and transport integration.

Under the Settlement section, Clause 14.01 Planning for Urban Settlement, one of the objectives is:

To facilitate the orderly development of urban areas.

At Clause 14.01-2 General Implementation the SPPF states that:

In planning for urban growth, planning authorities should encourage consolidation of existing urban areas while respecting neighbourhood character.

Under the Housing section, the objectives in relation to medium density housing as outlined in Clause 16.02-1 are:

- To encourage the development of well-designed medium-density housing which:
- Respects the neighbourhood character.
 - Improves housing choice.
 - Makes better use of existing infrastructure.
 - Improves energy efficiency of housing.

Clause 19.03 of the SPPF includes the following objectives in relation to Design and Built Form:

- To achieve high quality urban design and architecture that:
- Reflects the particular characteristics, aspirations and cultural identity of the community.
 - Enhances liveability, diversity, amenity and safety of the public realm.
 - Promotes attractiveness of towns and cities within the broader strategic contexts.

Clause 19.03-2 General Implementation states that:

Development should achieve architectural and urban design outcomes that contribute positively to local urban character and enhance the public realm while minimising detrimental impact on neighbouring properties.

ResCode

Before the introduction of the Victorian State Government's new residential provisions, collectively known as ResCode, character studies either aimed at

introducing local variations to the Good Design Guide, or they made use of other planning mechanisms available in the VPPs (Victoria Planning Provisions). Local variations proved to be difficult to achieve, and their potential seemed to have limited effectiveness compared to other mechanisms, which include:

- Local Policy (including additions to the Municipal Strategic Statement)
- Overlay Controls (eg Design & Development Overlay, Vegetation Protection Overlay)

The introduction of ResCode has meant that neighbourhood character is now the mandatory starting point in the assessment of planning applications. ResCode offers a selection of tools that provide progressive levels of protection for neighbourhood character. These tools can enable protection of existing character or encouragement of a preferred neighbourhood character determined by Council. The introduction of these tools into Councils' Planning Schemes requires a proper amendment process. The ResCode tools for the protection of neighbourhood character include:

- Zone provisions
- Schedule to the Residential zones to introduce varied ResCode standards
- Local Planning Policy
- Overlays, in particular the Neighbourhood Character Overlay which can be used to vary ResCode standards

All these tools are discussed more fully in Chapter 6 Implementation.

2.2 Council Policies

There are various sections of the Local Planning Policy Framework within the Colac Otway Planning Scheme, including local policies, which may impact upon the project. A description of each relevant section and its implications follows.

Municipal Strategic Statement

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) is part of the planning scheme and establishes the strategic planning framework for the Shire. It is a concise statement of the key strategic planning, land use and development objectives for the municipality and the strategies and actions for achieving the objectives. The statement provides the strategic basis for the application of the zones, overlays and particular provisions in the planning scheme and decision making by the Council.

The MSS provides an environmental, social and economic profile of the Colac Otway Shire and describes the state and regional context of the Shire, including the coastal environs. It details objectives and strategies for, among others:

- The coast and environs: to protect visual, environmental and cultural features of the coast and environs which give the Otway Coast its character while facilitating development in an environmentally sensitive way and providing greater residential choice.
- Limiting expansion of coastal settlements (other than Apollo Bay) in accordance with environmental constraints.

Clause 21.04-02 under The coast and its environs contains the following Key objective

"To protect those key visual, environmental and cultural features which give the Otway Coast its character whilst facilitating a range of developments in an environmentally sensitive way to provide greater residential choice and assist in diversifying the economic base of the Shire."

Strategies to achieve the objective are:

"Promote a pattern of settlements in the coastal strip that recognises a balance between opportunity for growth and retention of environmental and cultural qualities."
And

"Recognise and protect key environmental and cultural features."

Both of these Strategies have a list of implementation measures.

Another part of the strategic direction for the development of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Separation Creek and Wye River is outlined in Clause 21.04-13 Smaller Communities of the Shire in the MSS. The most relevant part of this Clause to this Study is:

Key Objective

To provide an attractive, safe, residential environment and strengthen the economic future of the small communities in the Shire.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Maintain and enhance the environmental qualities of small towns.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- *Encouraging the development of high quality design input to development in small communities.*
- *Identifying and promote key features of local communities that highlight their identity.*
- *Restricting the expansion of communities in areas of landslip and high fire risk.*
- *Encouraging the implementation of landscape features that recognise indigenous flora and fauna.*

Implications for this Review

The MSS does contain a number of objectives and strategies that recognise the special qualities of the Otway coast and its settlements. It is considered, nevertheless, that the MSS could be strengthened to provide additional objectives, strategies and actions relating to the protection and management of the character of the coastal townships. The review of the MSS, exhibited in 2003 as amendment C20 to the Colac Otway Planning Scheme has been abandoned, but a comprehensive review of the Planning Scheme has commenced and is due to be completed in 2005-06. It is considered that proposed amendment C20 as exhibited contained adequate neighbourhood character objectives and strategies. Should the neighbourhood character objectives of the exhibited version amendment C20 be incorporated into the current review of the Planning Scheme, no further changes are considered necessary. We have nevertheless made recommendations for changes to the existing MSS as the current review is incomplete.

Local Policies

The Colac Otway Planning Scheme contains a range of Local Policies related to the management of use and development within the Shire. Three of these have some relevance to the Neighbourhood Character Review:

- 22.01 Main Roads and Scenic Routes Policy
- 22.02 Ridgelines
- 22.05 Coastal and Otway Ranges Townships Policy

Main Roads and Scenic Routes Policy

The Main Roads and Scenic Routes Policy applies to two roads in or near the Study Areas, the Great Ocean Road and the Skenes Creek Road. The Policy reflects the Councils desire to protect the amenity, heritage and landscape values of scenic routes to and enhance the Shire's tourism attractiveness. Among other things, the policy aims to ensure a high level of visual amenity is achieved by blending

development into the environs. The policy states that the following factors should be taken into account in assessing applications for use or development along these roads:

- Buildings and works (including special setback provisions for the Great Ocean Road)
- Building materials (including a non-mandatory 8 metre height maximum)
- Landscaping

Implications for this Review

The neighbourhood character review is consistent with the desire to maintain the character, landscape and heritage values of the two routes, and acknowledges the importance of the Great Ocean Road. The policy is only effective where a planning permit is required.

This Study recognises the contribution that the location of buildings and works, building materials and landscaping make to the character of the coastal towns, and therefore their contribution to the scenic routes. In addition, the review further refines character elements to include:

- Landscape setting
- Views
- Building form and materials
- Building spacing
- Frontage treatments

Ridgelines

This Policy is to apply to all land located on and adjacent to prominent ridgelines. The objective of the policy is to ensure that all development is contained within visual corridors between prominent ridgelines to preserve the visual environment.

The Policy includes matters to be taken into account in considering development on or near ridgelines including:

- Buildings should not form a silhouette, the slope of the roof, external building materials
- Landscaping should be provide to assist in blending development into the landscape, be native species, mixture of heights of vegetation, reinstatement of removed vegetation and completion of landscaping within 12 months of development

Implications for this Review

The Design Guidelines that have been prepared as part of this review do not conflict with the intention of this local policy, and provide additional detail and decision making tools. Again, the policy is ineffective unless a planning permit is required.

Coastal and Otway Ranges Townships Policy

The Coastal and Otway Ranges Townships Policy applies to all land located within Skenes Creek, Wye River, Separation Creek and Kennett River as well as all other coastal townships included in the Residential 1, Township, Low Density Residential, Business 1, Business 2, Business 4 and Industrial 1 Zones. The policy aims to build on the MSS, which identifies the importance of protecting the character of the Otway Coast townships. It details a number of matters to be taken into account when considering applications to use and develop land within the townships, including:

- Design of buildings
- Building height
- Site coverage
- Roof form
- External building appearance
- Landscaping

In relation to building height, the policy states that new development of more than 2 storeys or 8 metres in height will be discouraged, along with building site coverage of more than 50%.

Implications for this Review

The Neighbourhood Character Study is consistent with the aims of this policy to maintain the character of coastal townships. However, the existing policy relies on some outdated neighbourhood character work and policy statements, which may no longer be relevant for application in the study areas. Further, the height and site coverage 'limits' in the policy are ineffective unless a planning permit is required. The Neighbourhood Character Study will provide alternative policy statements and design guidelines for matters to be taken into account when assessing applications for use or development in the residential areas of the coastal towns. It is recommended that this policy be reviewed in light of the most recent character study work and recommendations of this report.

2.3 Other Relevant Documents

Local Studies, Policies and Strategies

The following Council policies and strategies provided useful background information for the current study and were also reviewed. Where relevant, the implications for this Study are noted and discussed. Otherwise, it is considered that the findings of the Study are consistent with the content of the documents, with no direct implications.

Colac Otway Shire, April 2003, Kennett Creek, Separation Creek and Wye River Coastal Community Revitalisation Project (CCRP)

The CCRP establishes a bank of environmental information. The report makes a series of recommendations based on this data and community consultation. The recommendations are based largely on protecting the natural environment, particularly water and land quality, and protecting native vegetation.

Wye River Structure Plan, USE Consultants, 1996

The Wye River Structure Plan also applies to the Separation Creek area. It was prepared as a draft document for public comment in March 1996. Its status as an adopted Council plan is unclear, however the plan involved community consultation and wide acceptance. The Plan contained a vision for the townships as hamlets, developing in a way that did not impact on the natural environment. The Plan includes objectives relating to preserving the character of the towns consistent with engineering constraints, enhancing the liveability of the towns, controlling growth of the towns within the ridgelines to the north and south, and enhancing the natural attributes of the area. Priorities were seen as a cohesive landscaping strategy and improvements to the Wye River town centre.

Wye River and Separation Creek Foreshore Master Plan, Tract Consultants, 1997

The Masterplan was developed as a result of the Structure Plan exercise, and was developed in consultation with the Foreshore Committee and the wider community. The plan primarily aims to minimise intrusion by new structures, plant native vegetation, remove weeds and maintain the natural appearance of the area. Immediate and medium term actions were recommended, and a suite of street furniture proposed. It is understood that the Foreshore Committee has enacted many of the recommendations.

There are several other studies related to water, wastewater and geo-morphological issues in the area. These studies are of peripheral concern to the neighbourhood

character of the areas in the terms of ResCode. The study team is aware from these studies, however, that landslip is an issue in many of the townships to varying degrees.

Colac Otway Heritage Study, Stage 1, 1998

This study was carried out by Mary Sheehan and Associates to identify areas of potential significance, and to determine further work required to finalise identification. A small number of sites including the General Store at Kennett River, a house at Skenes Creek, a cairn at Separation Creek and at Wye River the War Memorial cairn and the Wye River Hotel are identified as potential places of cultural significance.

Regional Studies, Policies and Strategies

The following regional studies, policies and strategies also provide useful contextual information for the character study review. Again, where the implications for this review are not discussed, it is accepted that the document is consistent with the findings and outputs of the review and will not conflict with its conclusions.

Historic Places: Special Investigation South-western Victoria Final Recommendations, 1997

Provides recommendations to the Council for the protection, management and future use of 700 historic places and assigns them a state, regional or local level of significance. It covers historic places on public land in south-western Victoria, and recommends that a survey be undertaken to identify, document and assess the cultural landscapes of the region.

Coastal and Marine Planning Program, South West Victoria Coastal Planning Scheme Review, July 2001

Provides a review of planning schemes in place within the south western Victorian coastal region. It reviews existing statutory planning processes for the coastal zone in relation to the treatment of marine and coastal issues at a local and regional strategic level, the controls used, and the ability of councils to effectively utilise available planning tools. Amendments are proposed to improve consistency across the region.

Great Ocean Road Region Strategy, 2004

The strategy is a 20 year land use and transport plan for managing growth and change across the Great Ocean Road Region, which extends from Torquay to Warrnambool, and inland to the Princes Highway. The strategy is built around four key directions, being environment, settlement, access and prosperity. In relation to the key theme of settlement, policies relevant to the character of Apollo Bay and Marengo include:

- Direct urban growth to townships where it can be accommodated (policy 2.1).
- Protect the character of coastal towns and promote best practice design for new development (policy 2.2).
- Protect the open areas between towns (policy 2.4).

Implications for this Review

The GORR Strategy identified Apollo Bay as the primary growth location along the Colac Otway coast, reflecting the Council's own strategy. The GORR strategy clearly recognises that the growth capacity of the smaller settlements is limited. The Strategy therefore recognises the landscape significance of the coast and character of the townships within the broader setting, and the need to ensure that this character is maintained.

Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study, 2003

Planisphere has completed a Landscape Assessment Study of the Great Ocean Road Region in September 2003. The study was undertaken for the DSE concurrently with the draft strategy as described above, and informed its recommendations regarding landscape character and the protection of landscape values. The Landscape Assessment Study devised a methodology for assessing the character of landscapes and the way in which various types of development can be managed in different landscape types.

The study places the township of Skenes Creek within landscape character precinct 2.4 'Apollo Bay Coastal Valleys and Hills' within the 'Otway Foothills, Valleys and Uplands' landscape type. Precinct 2.4 Apollo Bay Coastal Valleys and Hills is described as:

... characterised by a backdrop of tall, steep rugged hills, at the foot of which is gently rolling land, sloping down to the coast. The wide sandy beach at Apollo Bay curves around to Wild Dog Creek, with grassy dunes and low bluffs behind. The hills that encase the precinct are predominantly cleared with some remnant shrubby foothill and riparian forest vegetation. Numerous rivers and creeks incise the hills and run to the bay, which is vegetated with remnant coastal heathland scrub. This largely open, cleared precinct is surrounded by dense, wet eucalypt forest, providing a stark character contrast.

The distinctive qualities and landscape significance of the precinct are also discussed in the study:

... distinctive as a location where a number of different landscape elements intersect in a dramatic manner: low sea coast, bayside townships, topographic edge of the Otway Ranges sweeping down to the narrow coastal strip, edge of the forest, and the incised, vegetated creek valleys. The edges and inter-relationships between these elements create a landscape setting of national significance.

The study recommends that the dramatic intersection of landscape 'edges' within the precinct should be retained and protected, and could be further emphasised by increasing indigenous planting for subtle emphasis. It is also recommended that development and inappropriate development on hill faces should be checked, and that township edges have the potential to be further defined.

The following landscape objectives were determined for the precinct:

- To increase the use of indigenous vegetation to highlight natural features within the precinct.
- To retain the contrasts between landscape elements within the precinct.
- To ensure that development that occurs on hill faces or in other prominent locations is not highly visible.
- To minimise the visual impact of signage and other infrastructure, particularly in coastal areas, hill faces and ridges.
- To protect the clear, sweeping views to the ocean available from the precinct.
- To retain the dominance of an indigenous natural landscape in coastal areas, between townships, particularly from the Great Ocean Road.

The townships of Wye River, Separation Creek and Kennett River are placed within Precinct 4.1 'Otway Ranges Forest and Coast' and the Otway Forest and Coast landscape type.

... large areas of dense forest cover hilly terrain, extending to the sea in places. The vegetation changes from wet to dry in response to changes in the orientation and type of terrain, which ranges from steep and rocky to smoothly rounded hills. Dry coastal sclerophyll forests occur on south west facing slopes, some of which meet the coastline. The vegetation is indigenous, tall, closed forest with understorey, sparser in the dry forest areas, and denser in sheltered gullies. ...much of the drive between from Lorne to Apollo Bay is lined with relatively low coastal vegetation. Here, the road clings to the face of rocky promontories and snakes past steep gullies, offering constantly changing prospect of sea, sky and coastal scenery.

The distinctive qualities of the precinct are described as:

containing large areas of dense, tall forest cover in hilly terrain, extending to the sea with high, rugged cliffs in places. In some coastal locations the vegetation is sparser and smaller in scale....

Precinct 4.1 covers most of the Otway Forests and Coast landscape character type... While the entire forest is a significant part of the region's landscape character, particular parts have greater significance. The Great Ocean Road hugs coastline from Lorne to Kennett River, offering some of the most dramatic cliff and coastal scenery able to be viewed by car or bus anywhere in the world and is a landscape of national significance. ...the remainder of the coastal landscape in the precinct (is) of state significance. (Precinct Package 4.1, p2)

In relation to the four townships themselves, the following 'thumb nail' descriptions of their relationship with the surrounding landscape are provided:

Skenes Creek is a small residential settlement, comprising scattered buildings in a ribbon formation along the Great Ocean Road, and on the cleared hills above the road. Buildings are all residential, with some motels and B&B style accommodation on former pastoral land. Development is exposed due to a lack of vegetation along the roadside and on the hill faces. Where development occurs in vegetated areas, it is less obtrusive and gives the impression of being tucked into the landscape.

Wye River (including Separation Creek) is a small settlement at the base of the Otway hills and adjacent to the coastline. The commercial zone is low key and blends in with the residential character; the narrow river that cuts through, and its bay, provide a stronger definition of the town centre. Housing is mostly simple shacks from the 50s to more recent times; they are nestled into the hills sometimes exposed but often concealed by the tree canopy which is eucalypt woodland with some heathy scrub. The beach is only small, with rocky points at either end defining the edge of the settlement.

Kennett River is located in a valley that falls to a small rocky beach and is largely cleared of trees and understorey. Housing is sprawled across the settlement; the simple weatherboard shack forms ranging in style from the 50s to present day. The township is surrounded by well-treed hills, with houses at the edges seeming to feather into their environment.

One of the products of the study is a 'Municipal Toolkit' for the Shire of Colac Otway, which outlines the landscape character issues particular to the Shire and provides recommendations as to how the study can be implemented through the Colac Otway Planning Scheme. One of the key recommendations of the study is that the Significant Landscape Overlay be utilised for all private land in Precinct 2.4, excluding the 'urban zoned' areas of the townships.

Implications for this Review

The Great Ocean Road Region work provided an invaluable landscape analysis within which to develop the neighbourhood character objectives for the residential parts of the townships. The findings and recommendations of the Landscape Assessment Study are totally compatible with the more detailed township character outputs, produced as part of this review.

Statewide Studies, Policies and Strategies

The following state level studies provided further background information for the review.

Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast, 1998

This document identifies significant features and characteristics of various sections of the coast and defines 34 'landscape setting types'. The definition of the landscape setting types was based on a number of criteria, including the nature and extent of the natural systems (geomorphology etc), cultural influences and impacts, and 'landscape character' (climatic, experiential, visual and spiritual).

Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast, 1998

To be read in conjunction with Landscape Setting Types for the Victorian Coast, this document contains functional, cultural and aesthetic, and ecological guidelines for designing and siting structures in a coastal setting. The cultural and aesthetic guidelines deal with the impact of structures on landscape character.

Victorian Coastal Strategy, 2002

Sets out principles, objectives and actions for the planning and management of the Victorian coast. The document is based on a commitment to ecologically sustainable development and also includes some broad information on demographic trends and the economic value of the coast.

Sense of Place: urban design principles for the metropolitan strategy, DSE/Planisphere, 2002

Suggests how sense of place can be better reflected in planning policies in the Metropolitan Strategy. Includes a description of landscape character types in Victoria, why that landscape is valued and outlines principles for development within the varying landscape character types. The report highlights that the underlying landscape character of an area is fundamental to its sense of place.



3. What is Neighbourhood Character?

3.1 Neighbourhood Character Defined

In December 2001 the Department of Infrastructure published a General Practice Note titled 'Understanding Neighbourhood Character'. Although the Note contains useful information, it fails to provide a single, all-encompassing definition of neighbourhood character. The nearest it comes to a succinct definition is: 'neighbourhood character is essentially the combination of the public and private realms'. The large number of matters it suggests as relevant tend to obscure, rather than illuminate, the essence of neighbourhood character. Yet there have been useful previous statements on this subject, either auspiced by the Department of Infrastructure, or produced by independent Panels.

A more succinct and encompassing definition was included in the Draft Practice Note on Neighbourhood Character published in June 2000 as part of the first draft of ResCode:

Neighbourhood character is the interplay of natural, built, social, cultural and economic conditions that make one place different from another.

This definition is helpful, but it has a number of shortcomings:

- It fails to focus precisely onto the meaning of neighbourhood character that is reflected in tools provided in the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPPs)
- It omits the adjective 'qualitative' in using the term 'interplay'.
- It makes no reference to the 'combination of the public and private realms' in the current Practice Note

It is true that people attribute widely differing meanings to the term 'neighbourhood character'. For many, character is about the people who live in the area; for others it is broad attributes of the area, such as closeness to shops or transport, how much open space or traffic there is. Because this character study has been commissioned to provide planning scheme policies and controls, it needs to be focussed on the physical planning outcomes that are capable of being influenced by planning scheme tools. Fundamentally we are aiming to answer the question: how do buildings and landscape interact? Built form, vegetation and topographical characteristics are the physical manifestation of neighbourhood character addressed in the VPPs. The Good Design Guide used these terms in defining neighbourhood character.

The term 'interplay' in the former Practice Note comes from the 1998 Advisory Committee report on the City of Monash neighbourhood character 'local variations' amendment, which coined the phrase 'qualitative interplay'. Qualitative interplay refers to the way that the main distinctive components of an area's character combine to produce a particular sense of place. This concept carries important implications:

- Neighbourhood character needs to be described in a written character statement; it is insufficient to simply produce a catalogue or list of characteristics.
- Character statements must be skilfully written to describe the synthesis of qualities that make one area distinct from another.
- Character statements should make clear which characteristics are most important, and the manner in which they relate to each other.

The term 'qualitative interplay' transcends 'private and public domains', as the Monash report emphasises. The character of buildings and their grounds cannot be divorced from the character of the street scene in which they sit. For example, in the inner suburbs of Melbourne buildings often present as solid 'walls' to the street, producing a hard, urban character. In some landscape-dominated areas on the urban fringe, natural bush vegetation flows across private property and public domain alike, only stopping at the edge of the roadway. Clearing all the trees on a private allotment would completely change the character of this type of area. So would the construction of kerb, channel and footpath, or planting of street trees of an incompatible species or in a formal pattern.

Therefore, in summary, neighbourhood character is a synthesis of public and private domain characteristics, as listed in the provisions of ResCode. It is the qualitative interplay between those characteristics that make a place, town or neighbourhood distinctive. Some characteristics are more important than others in creating this distinctive character.

Surveying all characteristics, then listing the 'key' characteristics, is a useful analytical tool. However a written statement that explains the interplay of the character components is necessary to properly describe, assess and evaluate the character of a particular area.

The following definition of neighbourhood character, used by a Department of Infrastructure working party into neighbourhood character that met in late 1999, seems to the Study Team to accommodate all of these requirements. It forms the basis of the work undertaken in this Neighbourhood Character Review:

Neighbourhood character is the qualitative interplay of built form, vegetation and topographic characteristics, in both the private and public domains, that make one place different from another.

Focusing on ResCode

In many areas, building type, era and spacing, the proportions and combined appearance of the 'walls' and 'floor' of the street space, and the amount and type of vegetation, are the critical determinants of the area's character. How the buildings 'sit' in their landscape is critical. Vegetation includes street trees, front garden vegetation, and canopy trees in rear yards and public reserves forming a backdrop. Critical elements of the 'walls' and 'floor' of the street space are: the height, permeability and profile of the 'walls'; the depth of front setbacks, type of garden (eg lawn and roses, shrubs and trees, or an apparent continuation of the street space planting), presence and permeability of front fence; and the formality (or otherwise) of the street space.

Other character components can include traffic, noise, type of activity and demographic characteristics. Members of the public often cite these as important characteristics of their neighbourhood. People often raise amenity issues such as access to open space in character consultation sessions. All of these can be argued to be an essential part of an area's character.

The important question in considering each potential component of character is: *how relevant is this to the task in hand?* In preparing policy and controls for implementation through the planning scheme, the focus of the study needs to be on elements that are mentioned in ResCode provisions and can therefore be influenced by the appropriate planning controls. Many of these other elements can be addressed through alternate mechanisms such as social development strategies, traffic management plans or public awareness campaigns that are outside the scope of planning schemes.

Neighbourhood Character is Not

The differentiation between different types of character area is not simply a question of architectural style or era of development. Neighbourhood character is founded on the layout and form of the areas, and the way that the built form interacts with and relates to the landscape. These factors should be the basis for the application of neighbourhood character policies. Neighbourhood character is not about the imposition of design styles. Rather it should be about recognising the distinctive characteristics of different urban forms, and their relationship to topography and vegetation. Getting this right is the best way of maintaining and enhancing the sense of place of the City's residential areas.

Nor is neighbourhood character about the amenity of adjoining properties as such, although it has implications for both these issues. In practical terms it does not, however, dictate planning controls for either. For example, some of the

recommended guidelines contained in the Character Precinct Brochures with regard to maintaining the rhythm of dwelling spacing in a Character Precinct or streetscape, may require that new buildings should be setback from both side boundaries. This may reduce the amount or number of buildings that can be accommodated on a site, and may also reduce potential amenity impacts from overlooking and overshadowing of adjoining properties. Site coverage and front setback controls may also have a similar effect in some instances. These are secondary outcomes of the neighbourhood character guidelines, and while not the primary intent, may reduce community concerns about other aspects of new development.

Nor is character about density controls. ResCode makes no provision for density controls, and it is considered that any policy that proposed density maximums or medium density housing saturation levels would not be supported by the Department of Sustainability and Environment. ResCode has more extensive provisions relating to amenity issues and it is likely that once these provisions become more widely implemented many amenity concerns, often at the heart of density issues, will be reduced.

3.2 Neighbourhood Character Principles

The following principles of neighbourhood character were prepared by a Department of Infrastructure working party into neighbourhood character that met in late 1999. They were included in the Draft Practice Note on Neighbourhood Character published in June 2000 as part of the first draft of ResCode. These form the basis of the process and content of the work undertaken for the Coastal Towns Neighbourhood Character Study 2004. The principles are:

Community Values

- The values of the local community are part of determining the appropriate response to neighbourhood character. Planning controls that aim to protect, change or improve character must draw on professional and community views.

The community should be involved in identifying the neighbourhood character measures appropriate to their area. Professionals assist in developing and translating these ideas into techniques to manage design.

Physical Focus

- Character, in its broadest sense, can include environmental, social and economic factors, but the planning system is concerned with managing the physical evidence of character and related social impacts.

The planning system is primarily focussed on achieving a wide range of objectives through the physical environment. Character is not concerned only with the private domain, as much of neighbourhood character is manifested in the public street space. However, some character issues are related to social outcomes or impacts. eg. The height of front fences is a town planning issue with character implications that may be physical (does a high fence contribute positively to the 'look' of the area?) and social (how do high fences affect social interaction?)

Special Qualities of an Area

- All areas have a character that can be described, evaluated and, in many cases, improved. In some areas protection of particular qualities may be warranted; but there is no distinction between areas of special character and 'the rest'.

The aim in placing greater priority on character is to improve the quality of the environment throughout Victoria's residential areas, not just in retaining or improving a few select 'special' areas that already have high amenity values. For this reason, a neighbourhood character is equally relevant everywhere. Planning controls should aim to protect identified distinctive and valued elements.

Interaction between Elements of Character

- Character is about the interrelationships between various elements of an area, and so cannot be described or evaluated by considering individual elements in isolation.

Design responses need to consider the whole picture of a neighbourhood, rather than focussing upon one or two elements of the building form or siting.

Neighbourhood Character and Other Planning Policies

- State and Council policies provide the rationale for decisions about whether to protect, change or improve the neighbourhood character of an area. Area-specific controls should be developed in the light of these strategic directions.

A Council's Residential Development or Housing Strategy (as expressed in its Municipal Strategic Statement) may provide guidance about priorities in any particular area.

Preferred Future Character

- Neighbourhood character descriptions and evaluations should focus on the preferred future character of an area.

Descriptions of existing characteristics are an important part of the process of identifying the 'starting point', but the desired character needs to be evaluated and considered in the context of other policy priorities. It may be that some areas should be encouraged to develop a new character, just as there may be some areas where critical elements need to be protected or reflected in all new development.

Neighbourhood Character Typologies

- There are a limited number of consistent neighbourhood character area types that can be defined, and frequently appropriate policy responses can be formulated without the need for expensive studies.

The 'Responding to Neighbourhood Character' ResCode Practice Note has adopted this approach in presenting possible policy responses to three typical residential character types. This is not to say that detailed analysis can be completely avoided, but much can be gained from shared understandings. Many Councils have undertaken very detailed character studies and this information may supplement the examples provided.

Site Analysis

- A site analysis, specifically from the neighbourhood character perspective, is necessary whether or not a detailed character study has been undertaken.

A site analysis is a mandatory requirement of ResCode.

Character and Heritage

- Character and heritage share many attributes, but there are important differences between the two concepts. Community values are a key justification for the protection of neighbourhood character. Policies to transform character may be appropriate in some areas.

Character studies evaluate the significance of built form, vegetation and topographical qualities, with reference to styles and ages where relevant, whereas heritage studies evaluate cultural heritage significance, with some reference to built form, vegetation and topographical qualities. (See below for further discussion.)

Character and Amenity

- The difference between neighbourhood character and amenity must be recognised.

Character and amenity are terms often used interchangeably, but in ResCode factors like visual and acoustic privacy and overshadowing should continue to be treated as issues separate to neighbourhood character.

3.3 Neighbourhood Character Types

Neighbourhood character is a fundamental of sense of place in residential communities. While many Councils have undertaken neighbourhood character studies, little or no attempt has been made to generalise the findings of these studies into a typology of neighbourhood character types. Broadly speaking, the following neighbourhood character types have been identified in the central region of Victoria¹:

Built Form/Landscape Relationship	Character Type
<i>Built form dominated residential areas</i>	'Inner Urban'
<i>Spacious residential areas in a garden setting (formal street pattern, generally modified grid)</i>	'Garden Suburban'
<i>Spacious residential areas in a garden setting (informal, generally curving street pattern with courts/cul-de-sacs)</i>	'Garden Court'
<i>Landscape dominated residential areas</i>	'Bush Suburban'

These four categories illustrate the four main types of residential area that exist in the central region of Victoria, from an urban design perspective. The differentiation between these types is NOT based on architectural style or era of development. It IS founded on the layout and form of the areas, and the way that the built form interacts with and relates to the landscape. These factors should be the basis for the application of neighbourhood character policies. Neighbourhood character is NOT about the imposition of design styles. Rather it should be about recognising the distinctive characteristics of different urban forms, and their relationship to topography and vegetation. Getting this right is the best way of maintaining and enhancing the sense of place of the central region's residential areas.

Within each of these four main character types, there can be wide variations. These are important in differentiating the character of one neighbourhood from another, and in creating or strengthening sense of place. These variations are identified through the detailed survey, and are highlighted in the 'description' of each character area that appears in the Character Precinct Brochures.

In the coastal towns of Colac Otway the residential areas primarily fall within the 'Bush Suburban' type, with some areas bordering on the 'Garden Suburban' typologies. These terms may not seem to reflect the semi-rural nature of the township settings, however they are intended to cover a range of situations and localities.

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¹ An initial version of these character types, prepared by Planisphere, was included in the Draft Practice Note on Neighbourhood Character published in June 2000 as part of the first draft of ResCode. Although this Practice Note has since been superseded, it provided some useful principles about the nature of neighbourhood character. The upgraded version of the character types shown here is included in *Sense of Place: urban design principles for the metropolitan strategy*, a technical report on urban design prepared by Planisphere and published in October 2002 as part of the Metropolitan Strategy.

Areas with New and Changing Character

Some areas are subject to redevelopment, or have aspects of their character that are a cause of strong concern by local people, warranting change to the physical fabric. In both these instances, the appropriate planning strategy may well be to try to improve the character of the area by changing it. Achieving a measured and consistent change in the development character of an area requires a sound approach to planning. Definition of the new character will often require urban design skills, and the process of managing change may require a sophisticated program of community involvement





4. Neighbourhood Character in the Coastal Townships

4.1 Community Values

In documenting the valued character of each of the four townships, it is essential to gauge community values. Community values were sought through a number of means:

- A resident perceptions survey undertaken by Council in the four townships in October 2002;
- Two rounds of community forums (July and September 2005) with workshops held in Melbourne and Wye River on each occasion; and
- Written submissions made to the draft Precinct Issues Papers (in July / August) and Draft Precinct Brochures (September).

A complete summary of the community forums and written submissions is contained in [Appendix 3](#). The key outcomes of each are summarised below.

Council Resident Perceptions Survey

Resident perceptions were obtained through a survey prepared by the Council, based on a similar survey conducted of Apollo Bay. The survey was circulated to all property owners of Skenes Creek, Separation Creek, Wye River and Kennett River in late 2002, and 361 were returned: 136 in Skenes Creek, 43 in Separation Creek, 113 in Wye River, and 69 in Kennett River. The results of this work were provided to Planisphere and were summarised into the draft Community Values for the Issues Papers.

The Council's survey contained open ended questions that allowed respondents to describe the features of the design of dwellings in their street that they liked or disliked, the appropriate minimum lot size in the town, and maximum building height. There was also a section for additional comments that was used extensively by many.

Consistent themes from the responses relating to 'liked' and 'disliked' dwellings included are summarised in the table below.

Liked	Disliked
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Casual, non-cluttered feel ▪ A mixture of old and new ▪ Beachy feel ▪ Low building heights ▪ Lack of unit development ▪ Wide roads with trees / landscaping on nature strips ▪ Views / backdrop of ocean / harbour / hills ▪ Foreshore and natural environment ▪ Recreation and open space areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Houses too close to the roads ▪ Houses too close to each other, or on too much of the site ▪ Suburban style houses ▪ Blocking of views ▪ Traffic speeds ▪ House prices / people leaving / new developments geared to "out of towners" ▪ Varied styles of plants and fences ▪ 'Boxy' style houses ▪ Power poles / towers / other infrastructure

There were mixed views expressed about building style, with some people embracing new styles, and others who consider some new designs either too 'outlandish' or too suburban in nature. Some also commented that the older buildings were sometimes looking unkempt or in need of a 'facelift', while others considered the 1960s fibro dwellings to be an important contributor to the seaside feel.

Qualitative responses suggested maintenance of landscape setting and views rated very highly among permanent and non-permanent residents alike.

Responses to specific questions asked in the survey relating to lot sizes and height limits were reasonably consistent. A large proportion of respondents considered that lot sizes should be large, such as 800-1000 sq.m. Heights of two storeys were generally considered to be an appropriate maximum.

In all towns the overwhelming majority of people considered that "preservation within the town" was a very important issue. The percentage agreeing with this statement was greatest in Kennett River (94% of respondents) and lowest in Skenes Creek (77%).

When asked "Do you think a planning permit should be required for all development in your town?" only a small proportion of respondents disagreed. Kennett River and Skenes Creek recorded the highest proportion of people supporting permit controls (88% and 87%), and Wye River the lowest (76%).

These survey results indicate that a large majority of respondents consider the character of their towns to be important and that the character could be threatened by new development, hence the need for planning controls.

First Round of Community Consultation

Community Forums (July 2004)

Two community forums were held in Melbourne and Wye River in July 2004. A total of approximately 100 people attended the forums. The purpose of the first round of forums was to establish the things that people valued about the character of their area. The forums followed initial character analysis by the study team, and a review of the responses to Councils community perceptions survey.

Participants were presented with draft Precinct Issues Papers, which provided a description of the precinct, a list of key characteristics and a summary of community values. Participants were asked:

- Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the vision for the townships?
- Review the community values: Are these correct?
- What should the Preferred Character be?

In general, there was support for the list of key characteristics listed although some valuable additions were made, including the value of mature non-invasive exotic vegetation in some precincts. Strong consideration of natural values and bush character was evident in both forums and for all townships.

There was considerable discussion as to the appropriate boundaries of precincts, with some useful adjustments suggested affecting all for townships. Many of these were later translated into the final precinct boundaries.

There was strong support for the summary of community values. A summary of new or particularly strongly held likes and dislikes is as follows:

Likes

- Houses are sympathetic and environmentally blending
- Casual non-commercial feel
- Differences between settlements
- Control tree removal and landslip
- Unsealed roads, part of the character
- Space between buildings

Dislikes

- Don't want to be like Apollo Bay or Lorne
- Impact of weeds
- High buildings
- Lack of vegetation protection
- Some new homes lack trees (Kennett River)
- Concern about 'bulkier' developments

- Village atmosphere, beach holiday feel, 'hamlet'
- Lots of native vegetation
- Houses blend with coastal character
- Natural features (e.g. creeks, beach) are important
- Preferred character statements need to deal with size of developments
- Don't want 'suburban' character
- High-density over-development
- Dominant large houses
- Limit units / flat developments
- Concern about houses blocking others' views

Written submissions

Participants were also provided the opportunity to provide written comments after the workshop, or if unable to attend. Eighteen responses were received, the majority from people who attended the workshops. Responses served to emphasise many of the values expressed in the workshops, particularly the importance of environmental characteristics, bush character and concern about 'over development' a few respondents made suggestions about the method for obtaining community input.

Second Round of Community Consultation

A second round of community consultation was run in September 2004 to receive feedback on the emerging guidelines and controls to achieve the desired character for the townships.

Community forums

Community forums were held in Melbourne and Wye River with an attendance of approximately 70 people. Participants were provided with the draft Precinct Brochures and asked to consider their contents in detail and provide feedback on:

- The Township Vision
- Key Existing Characteristics
- The Updated Preferred Character Statement; and
- Design Guidelines for each Precinct.

Comments were largely supportive with some valuable suggestions. Additional considerations included:

- restriction of commercial activity
- enhancement of the waterways
- safety and bushfire risk
- consideration of the difficulties with locating garages, carports etc behind the line of the dwelling only where site conditions allow;
- concern that height limits were arbitrary;
- changes to precinct boundaries
- need to prevent spread of townships and protect undeveloped areas (especially ridgelines) surrounding towns;
- protect all native vegetation; and
- reference to 'sleepy hollow' character of the towns.

Written submissions

Again, property owners were provided the opportunity to provide written comments after the workshop, or if unable to attend. Nine responses were received, including

some valuable references to the importance of previous studies and reiteration of the considerations identified in the forums.

Importance of Neighbourhood Character

The four townships are highly valued for their landscape and coastal setting. The features that contribute to this setting play an important role in the sense of place of the townships, and attract permanent and temporary residents and holiday makers alike. Located on the Great Ocean Road, the character of all townships can also be seen to be of importance to a wider community of national and international tourists.

The findings of the community values work supports the assumption that members of the communities of the townships place a high value on neighbourhood and landscape character within and around the four townships. The high response to the survey and workshop attendance, relative to the number of property owners, indicates a high level of concern and interest in the character, future development and appearance of the townships.

The survey established that permanent and non-permanent residents both value similar characteristics of the townships. While permanent residents mention the one month of hectic activity over the summer as a negative characteristic, both groups value the picturesque and quiet, hamlet-like qualities of the towns. Many mention the strong sense of community within their town, which results from the small size and contained nature of the development.

Summary of Community Values

The community of Skenes Creek Precinct 1 values:

- Trees, bush and natural vegetation.
- Mix of houses and styles.
- Space around dwellings.
- Houses that blend with the environment.
- Seaside character.
- Lack of commercial development.
- Modest, older 'country style' houses.
- Large blocks with native bush.
- Unsealed roads.
- Houses that are well maintained.

The community of Skenes Creek 2 values:

- Mixed housing, variety of styles, blend of old and new.
- Bush / beach outlook and views.
- Low key holiday / seaside style housing.
- Houses set substantially back from roads
- Unsealed roads
- Space between dwellings.
- Absence of unit development and commercial activity.
- Houses that blend with the coastal character.
- Well maintained houses.

The community of Kennett River Precinct 1 values:

- Natural bush surrounds.
- Houses that blend with natural background.
- Spaces between dwellings.
- Varying styles.

- Sea views where available.
- Houses screened or set back from roads.
- No or minimal fencing.
- Well maintained houses.

The community of Kennett River 2 values:

- Small, modest 'holiday style' beach houses.
- Modern, but not obtrusive dwellings.
- Coastal views and surrounds.
- Colours that blend with the natural environment
- Space around dwellings.
- Well maintained houses.

The community of Wye River Precinct 1 values:

- Bush gardens and tree canopy, habitat for wildlife
- Houses that are sympathetic to the environment and blend with surrounding bush and native vegetation.
- Large blocks.
- Space between buildings.
- New innovative designs and materials.
- Diversity of styles; mix of old and new.
- Well maintained houses.

The community of Wye River 2 values:

- Variety of housing styles
- Unobtrusive buildings that are beneath the tree line.
- Simple, older style holiday houses.
- Generous spaces between buildings.
- Material colours that blend with the surroundings.
- Beach character.
- Well kept and tidy properties.
- Views and environmental features (bush and coast).

The community of Separation Creek Precinct 1 values:

- Mixture of old and new dwellings.
- Adjacent bushland.
- Simple, older, beach style houses.
- Colours and materials which fit with bush / coastal setting.
- Space around buildings
- Interesting architecturally designed new houses.
- Lack of commercial development.
- Views to bush and seascape.
- Natural materials and innovative design.
- 'Holiday' atmosphere.
- Well maintained houses.

4.2 Detailed Survey

The detailed survey was designed to gather and record the information necessary to establish the key characteristics of each area, within the broad parameters of the planning system. This involved two days of field survey and photography.

The outcomes in terms of description and classification of neighbourhood character are described in this chapter.

Survey and Review of Precincts

The study team conducted a street-by-street survey of all Township zoned areas of the four townships. The survey provided a basis for establishing:

- The detailed key characteristics of each area within the townships
- The characteristics that remained consistent across a wider area, and an understanding of where these characteristics changed
- An initial insight into the types of development occurring in each area, and the threats to the neighbourhood character
- An extensive photo library of the study area for use in the Precinct Brochures.

The amount and type of data collected was tailored to achieve the most effective result for the Council. Data collected was aimed at establishing the key characteristics of the residential neighbourhoods of the townships as opposed to a catalogue of unrelated or peripheral information. We adjusted the survey methodology successfully used in previous studies to:

- Reflect the particular issues of the townships
- Anticipate particular data collection needs relating to ResCode
- The detailed survey, covering every residential street in the municipality, recorded the following information on maps of the townships:

Built Form	Landscape	Public Domain
Architectural era and style	Private garden styles	Street tree spacing
Dwelling materials	Topography and views	Street tree species
Roofing materials		Footpath treatment
Front setbacks		Road treatment
Side setbacks		
Front fence treatment		
Number of storeys		

4.3 The Character of the Townships

Residential areas of the townships have qualities that distinguish them from other rural towns and residential neighbourhoods across the state and from metropolitan Melbourne. These qualities relate to the landscape setting of the townships, on the coast and in regional Victoria. Having undertaken the detailed survey, met with the community at two workshops and reviewed the community surveys, and having considered their own experience in undertaking previous character studies, the team were able to reach conclusions about the character in the towns.

Distinctive Qualities of the Towns

The coastal townships of Colac Otway are distinctive largely for their landscape setting. The steeply sloping gullies around which the townships have grown are important landscape features of the region. Settlements originally clustered around these river gullies for water, as services were only connected to the townships in the post-war era. The landscape has dictated the form of buildings, most of which have been designed to cope with the sloping land. The landscape has also dictated the access routes that wind their way up from the Great Ocean Road and give the towns their informal feel.

While the overall impression of the settlements is of low scale built form, nestled between the hills and the coast, the residential areas within the settlements vary in character. The older areas often have the more defined 'beachy' character. These areas are characterised by 'light' low scale dwellings set in spacious, but simple garden settings. The casual coastal feel is strengthened by the often unmade, windy streets, with 'unfinished' grassy or vegetated edges.

The heavily vegetated upper slopes of the settlements, set further from the coast, often vary considerably from the areas closer to the beach. The areas closer to the beach and the Great Ocean Road were often developed earlier in the townships' settlement history, and were sometimes cleared in the process. Vegetation has since grown back but may be less dense than more recently developed, and less accessible, areas. Where views are available of the ocean houses are often either elevated or two storeys.

In the limited parts of the townships where formal street treatments, such as sealed roads with kerbs and channels, have been installed these have a significant impact on the appearance of the area.

Character Precincts

Character precincts are delineated in order to define areas that could share a common preferred character. The use of precincts also enables the study findings and guidelines to be presented and communicated in a way that is accessible to local people and useful to planning applicants and Council officers. In some cases, this leads to larger areas of common characteristics being subdivided.

It is important to note that *preferred* character is the main criterion for character area delineation. Character studies that attempt to delineate every variation in *current* characteristics tend to produce very large numbers of precincts. While this approach might have some benefits in achieving a finer grain of information, it also results in some disadvantages.

Precinct Size

A constant problem with character studies is the sheer volume of information that is generated from the detailed survey. A major challenge is to be able to 'see the wood for the trees'. There are dangers in providing too much information, and benefits in being able to focus attention on the handful of key characteristics whose 'qualitative interplay' is fundamental to maintaining or strengthening the preferred character of an area. For example, a widespread misunderstanding about character studies is that they seek to control the aesthetics of detailed design. This misapprehension may be exacerbated if the existing architectural style is always a decisive criterion in delineating area. There are many types of character precincts in which building design is not a major issue (eg in heavily treed environments). A precinct may contain a variety of different building types and styles.

The actual size of a character precinct is determined by two factors, one based on the theory and the one on the practice. The first criterion is the similarity of the streetscape characteristics. Where the same set of factors are noted as significant to the preferred character these areas should logically be grouped together as the same set of guidelines will apply. The emphasis here is on ensuring that the same objectives and set of changes needed to achieve these objectives, apply to both areas. The second criterion is useability. If two similar areas are geographically remote it will be difficult for planners and applicants to find and relate the information to the particular area. For this reason similar areas with similar guidelines may be in different precincts.

Precincts and Preferred Character

Furthermore, preferred character should be a concept that provides a broad direction rather than prescriptive detail. Achieving an uninterrupted flow of landscape and vegetation across private and public domain might be the main aim of a Preferred Character Statement. From this aim, numbers of policies and guidelines are derived. These are cognisant of the existing situation with boundary treatments, site coverage etc, but fine grain local variations in these characteristics today should not preclude the setting of an aim to create, in the future, a consistent character across a broader

area. Town planning is, after all, about creating desired futures. Town planning policy should be arrived at after considering existing conditions. It should not necessarily be determined by them.

Precincts and Site Analysis

ResCode provides for a process of site analysis that encompasses an assessment of neighbourhood character. The preparation of a character study does not remove the need for a site assessment. Local conditions and the specific circumstances need to be assessed and considered alongside the preferred character for the area. They may also change over time. It is not necessary for a character study to provide a detailed brief for every site. The character study should provide the broad future direction, complemented by the site analysis, which assesses detailed local conditions.

Precinct Delineation

Character precinct delineation is arrived at by considering all of the factors outlined so far in this chapter. Some emphasis is placed on the detailed survey findings, but because the basis of delineation is preferred character, all the other factors may also be relevant. More information about the process by which Preferred Character Statements were arrived at is contained in [Section 5.1](#).



5. Character Directions for the Coastal Townships

5.1 Preferred Character

Information from the detailed survey maps was utilised to determine areas of like character, or precincts, within each township. Having produced a delineation of character precincts, the study team assembled a set of 'issues papers', one for each precinct. A complete draft of these was presented to the first round of Community Workshops, and time allowed for comments.

With the increasing emphasis of neighbourhood character theory on preferred character, it is necessary to develop a logical way to arrive at a Preferred Character Statement. Without an explicit emphasis on preferred character, character studies tend to dwell on existing characteristics. Most of the survey work of a character study, and most of the discussions in the initial stages of the project, focus exclusively on present characteristics. Also, community members tend to be sceptical and guarded when the issue of a preferred future character is placed on the agenda. Many respond that they want 'no change', or that they have no desire to impose their view of a preferred character on others. A sound, simple process is needed to 'unlock' this subject, one that enables the participants to see the sense and logic of it. It is also important for a future Planning Panel to be able to examine an explicit process by which Preferred Character Statements have been crafted.

Precinct Issues Papers

The Precinct Issues Papers were one of the first tangible products of the study, and were prepared to draw together relevant background information and make an initial assessment of the preferred character of areas, specifically to obtain community feedback. The Precinct Issues Papers, as amended following feedback, are reproduced in [Appendix 2](#). Each contain the following information:

Township Description

Each township has an individual setting and overall character that is described in the first paragraph of the Issues Paper. The key elements of the township that distinguish it from others along the coast are encapsulated.

Description

The description examines the Precinct and outlines distinct features that are common to the Precinct. The description in words is strengthened by the use of Precinct photos across the top of the Issues Papers.

Key Existing Characteristics

The existing neighbourhood characteristics for each locality are summarised in this section. The characteristics such as architectural styles, building materials, setbacks, garden types, fencing styles, topography and road treatments were identified through the detailed survey.

Council Strategic Directions

Because character cannot be seen in isolation from other aspects of planning policy, information regarding the existing Council planning policy context, primarily from the planning scheme, has been included.

Existing Controls

Planning scheme controls such as zoning and overlay requirements are detailed as a context for an understanding of the regulatory framework within which the township currently operates, and for future recommendations about planning controls.

Development Activity / Pressures

Planners from the Colac Otway Shire were consulted to determine where Council was receiving the greatest pressure for development. Any development pressures specific to each character precinct are outlined in this section. Those pressures identified, if any, determine how the development guidelines should be targeted, and ultimately the choice of planning controls.

Community Values

The community values are summarised from the consultation survey undertaken by the Council. These issues raised by the community reflect values and other matters that should be addressed throughout the course of the project, and in the Design Guidelines. This is a specific aspect of the Issues Papers that was tested and amended through the community workshops process.

Preferred Character Directions

Based on the previous information considered, the preferred character directions set out the character elements that should be maintained, and those that should be strengthened.

Preferred Character Statement

Each Precinct Issues Paper concluded with a draft Preferred Character Statement that outlines the desirable character features for that area, and how they should be achieved. The Preferred Character Statement is an important part of the Precinct Issues Paper because it provides the starting point for development of the Design Guidelines (see next section). The introductory part of the statement establishes a broad direction, and the bullet points beneath set out the main menu of elements for which guidelines need to be prepared.

Views of the Community and Council Officers

The Precinct Issues Papers were presented and distributed at the first round of community Workshops. Several written submissions were received as a result of the Workshops. In addition comments made at the meetings were recorded and utilised in a review of the Papers, prior to development of the draft Precinct Brochures. A summary of the community comments, and responses to the comments, is provided in [Appendix 3](#).

Council officers also reviewed the Precinct Issues Papers and provided feedback before work on the Design Guidelines commenced.

5.2 Character Guidelines

Having amended the Precinct Issues Papers in the light of comments received, the study team prepared Design Guidelines for each character precinct. The guidelines, when added to selected information from the Precinct Issues Papers, were presented as draft Precinct Brochures. The final Precinct Brochures are contained in [Appendix 5](#).

Precinct Brochures

General Brochure

There is a 'General Brochure' for each township that operates as an instruction sheet for the individual Precinct Brochures. The General Brochure includes information about the Neighbourhood Character Study, and an explanation on how to use the

Precinct Brochures. It contains a map of all the character precincts in the township to assist in identifying the relevant precinct.

The General Brochure also includes a Township Vision statement for each township, intended to reflect the community's aspirations for the townships. The vision was prepared by the study team and presented to the community during the second round of workshop sessions, for comment. The vision is repeated on each of the Precinct Brochures to provide context for the remainder of the content.

Precinct Brochures

A total of seven character precincts were identified in the townships, two in each of Wye River, Skenes Creek and Kennett River, and one in Separation Creek, and a brochure has been prepared for each. The Precinct Brochures have a consistent layout and content. Written content includes an existing character description of the precinct, a list of the key characteristics, a preferred future character statement and Design Guidelines. The Preferred Character Statement details the critical elements that will achieve the statement and identifies threats to the preferred character. Visual content includes photos taken from within the character precinct that are exemplary of the neighbourhood character for that area. All of these elements are drawn from the Precinct Issues Papers, as amended following consultation.

On the reverse side of the Precinct Brochures are the Design Guidelines for that precinct. The Design Guidelines address the following character elements for each precinct:

- Township Setting and Views
- Buildings and Structures
- Streetscape
- Vegetation

The performance based Design Guidelines address these character elements as relevant to the circumstances and preferred character of the precinct.

Each character element is accompanied by:

- **Objective:** which briefly states the intentions and desired outcomes for each character element.
- **Design Response:** which outlines the preferred ways in which the objective can be achieved. Other methods to achieve the objective may be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction.
- **Avoid:** which describes inappropriate design methods when trying to achieve the objective.

Views of the Community and Council Officers

The Precinct Brochures were provided in draft form to the attendees of the second round of workshops and to Council officers for viewing and comment, and were generally well received. A small number of comments were received about the content, and changes have been made accordingly.

5.3 Precincts and Preferred Character

In total 7 Precincts were identified over the four settlements. The maps on the following pages show the delineation of the precincts. The Preferred Character of each is repeated from the brochures below.

Skenes Creek 1

This precinct provides a native 'green wedge' for the whole township, extending from the hillslopes behind the town to the Great Ocean Road. The character of the precinct will be strengthened by the planting and regeneration of indigenous and native vegetation. Dwellings will be set far enough apart to accommodate substantial native bush areas including canopy trees, and will be set substantially below the vegetation canopy. The semi-rural feel of the area will be retained by the lack of fencing and frequent unmade roads. Views to the dwellings will be softened by native vegetation in frontages to major roads and in the public domain along road verges.

Skenes Creek 2

This precinct will continue to be characterised by diverse coastal dwellings set amongst established coastal gardens. The sense of openness will be maintained by setting the buildings apart, minimising intrusive front fencing, and encouraging building forms that respect views to the surrounding hills and coast. The precinct will be united by consistent mature plantings of native and exotic coastal species in the public and private domains.

Kennett River 1

This precinct will be dominated by continuous native bush, with dwellings set below and amongst remnant canopy trees. Frontages will be open and consist of diverse native understorey that screens views of buildings from roads. The low scale dwellings will avoid prominent locations and ridgelines, and will be sited to provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast where available. Vegetation will be retained or replaced with any new developments to screen buildings when viewed from the Great Ocean Road. Innovative house styles will be encouraged of a scale, materials and colours that blend with the bush character and follow the topography. The informal bush character of the precinct will be assisted by the streetscape planting and lack of formal kerbing.

Kennett River 2

This precinct will consist of coastal style dwellings set amongst gardens of native species. A spacious garden character will be maintained by setting buildings apart and encouraging landscaping between dwellings. Dwellings will be carefully designed, sited and landscaped to be unobtrusive when viewed from roads and to provide for a sharing of views to the coast where available. Trees in both public and private domains will provide a sense of continuity through the precinct and visually link with the adjacent bushland areas.

Wye River 1

This precinct will continue to be characterised by dominant native bush that forms a consistent canopy, linking to the adjacent bushland. Dwelling scale, bulk and siting will respond to the site and topography, allowing space and setbacks to maintain native bush, both as canopy and understorey. Buildings will be set beneath the canopy, and appropriately sited and designed so as to allow for the sharing of views to the coast where available, and to be hidden from view from the Great Ocean Road. The informality of the streetscapes will be retained by the lack of front fencing, frequent unmade roads and remnant vegetation.

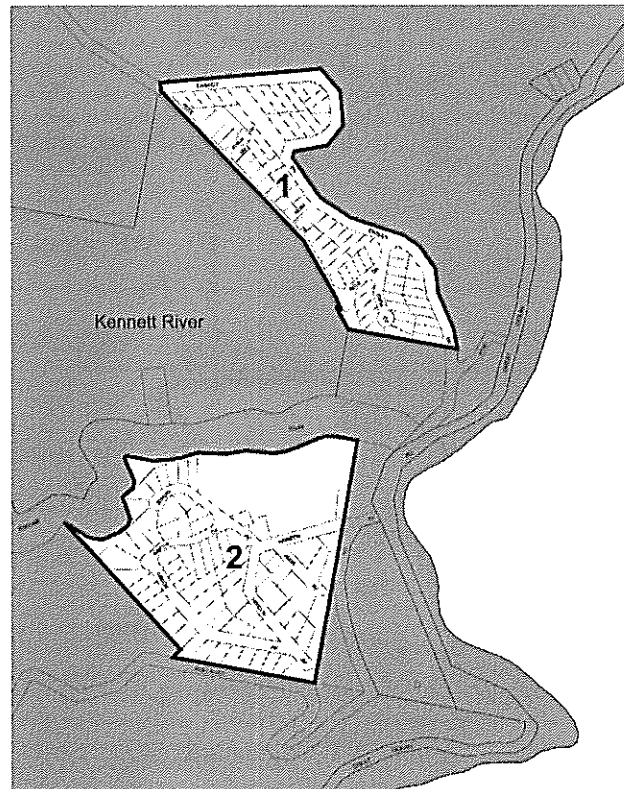
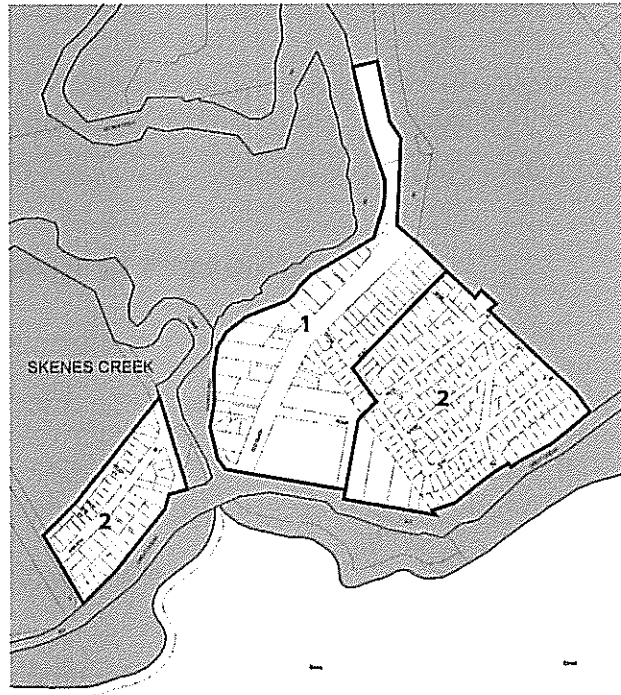
Wye River 2

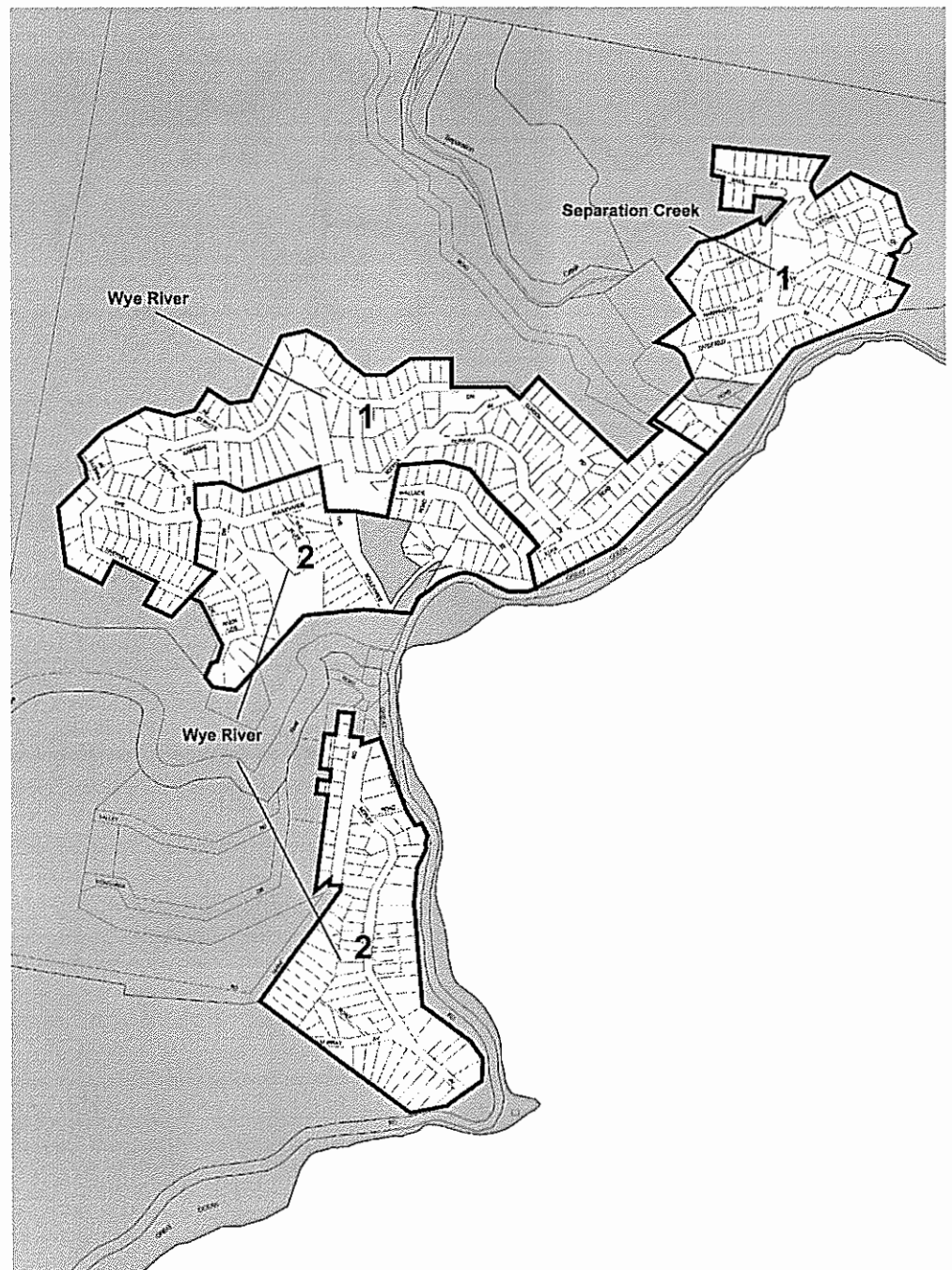
This precinct will achieve a more consistent native vegetation coverage to provide a unifying feature throughout. Space around dwellings will be sufficient to maintain trees and understorey, and minimises the appearance of building bulk and density. On hill slopes, buildings will relate to topography and be set amongst and beneath a dominant, native tree canopy. Buildings and structures in prominent locations when viewed from the Great Ocean Road will be designed to reduce their visual intrusion. Retention and planting of canopy trees in the public domain and around dwellings will be encouraged to establish a consistent tree canopy.

Separation Creek 1

This precinct will consist of a mix of low, coastal style dwellings and newer coastal styles, in established gardens and amongst native canopy trees in the vegetated hillfaces. Dwellings will be of materials and colours that reflect the coastal setting, and be designed and sited so as to minimise intrusion into views from roads, public spaces and adjacent dwellings and impact on the topography. Establishment of native and coastal trees in public and private gardens will unite the precinct and provide visual links to the surrounding bushland and creek environs.

Map of Precincts





5.4 Key Character Issues

Having completed the Precinct Brochures, including the Design Guidelines, the next task for the team to consider was implementation. A number of key character issues needed to be addressed in considering the best implementation tools.

Landscape Setting

The wider landscape setting of the townships is distinctive within the Great Ocean Road region and, arguably, significant on a national scale. The landscape is characterised by steep, rugged hills, at the foot of which is usually a small strip of gently sloping land, down to the beach. The townships are nestled on opposing sides of creek valleys that incise the hills and run to the ocean, and are vegetated with remnant coastal scrub and some introduced species. The hills that surround the settlements are predominantly remnant shrubby foothill and riparian forest vegetation, other than the cleared farming hills behind Skenes Creek south.

Though outside the residentially zoned areas of the townships, and therefore outside the realms of this study, it is this setting of national significance that makes these coastal townships such attractive places to live and visit. And it is the landscape setting to which the future character of the township should respond.

Coastal Character

Coastal townships such as Wye River and Skenes Creek are often described as non-urban/non-suburban, casual and unfinished. Much of this 'unpolished' character is found in the older parts of the townships, as distinct from new subdivisions, and is a result of the combination of 'beachside' building types and styles, and informal street treatments.

Many of the streets in the townships have a sense of casualness as a result of their 'non-engineered' qualities. Some roads are unsealed, or even if they are sealed, they have informal grassy verges with no formal kerb and channelling. Bushy coastal planting often spills from front gardens into the road reserves, and there is a general lack of hard surfacing. The 'beachside' dwelling styles strengthen this coastal character. Some of the elements of built form that contribute to this quality are the simple timber or fibro houses, with low or single pitched roofs, set in bushy coastal gardens. The dwellings are often elevated to take advantage of the sea views and due to the steeply sloping sites, and have decks or verandahs with simple detailing.

The existence of 'heavy' urban or suburban building forms in coastal towns is emerging as a key issue. Traditionally the casual, 'beachside' character was derived from light, simple buildings with articulated forms and a mix of materials. The Design Guidelines have addressed this concern, encouraging contemporary, well articulated and site responsive dwellings in a mix of materials and finishes.

Views

Views to the surrounding landscape, including the Otway foothills from the coast and to the ocean from the residential areas, provide a visual context or point of reference for visitors and residents to the townships, and contribute to their experience of the place. As such, views and vistas within the townships and to the surrounding landscape are an important aspect of the neighbourhood character. Designing for views has also helped to shape the built form of the townships, in that it has affected, and will continue to affect, the spacing, height and upper articulation of dwellings.

There are examples of Local Policy in Victorian planning schemes that make reference to encouraging a reasonable sharing of views or maintaining or respecting existing view corridors.

One such example is the Maribyrnong River Corridor Policy in the Moonee Valley Planning Scheme (Clause 22.11) where it states that it is policy to:

- Encourage new development to respect existing view corridors to the river and parklands from existing nearby properties.
- Maintain views through existing and new development from adjacent roads and footpaths to the river and parkland.

The Coastal Development Policy at Clause 22.01 of the Surf Coast Planning Scheme is another example where the Objectives include:

- *To protect viewsheds and ensure that development is sited and designed to blend with the surrounding development, particularly when viewed from the Great Ocean Road and other significant public viewing points.*
- To recognise that views form an important part of the amenity of a property and to provide for a reasonable sharing of views of significant landscape features, including views of the ocean, coastal shoreline...

It is policy that the height, scale and bulk of buildings will be controlled in order to:

- Protect residential amenity by encouraging a reasonable sharing of views between new and established properties, particularly where the view is of a significant landscape feature, including views of the ocean...

The Surf Coast Policy requires consideration of views in the siting, size, height, bulk, site coverage and external colouring and materials of buildings within each township and settlement along the coast of the Shire.

The sharing of views was an issue raised by the community during the consultation phases. While the study team recognises that views are not owned and cannot be claimed as a right in law, there is a recognition that views to the water are an aspect of the character of the area that is valued by the community as a whole. The ability to glimpse the sea or estuarine river between buildings, from your verandah or to view it from public vantage points is intrinsic to the 'sense of place' in seaside areas. Without these glimpses and vistas some of the seaside areas could not be distinguished from another township or suburb. It is frequently these views that make a seaside location distinctive, or at least distinctive from other seaside locations. Areas with views to water (bay, ocean, rivers) are undergoing intense development pressures throughout Victoria, and never more so than along the Great Ocean Road. Therefore the issue of loss of view is constantly before the Council.

The recommendations of this study include Design Guidelines for Precincts where views are considered to form part of the character. The intent of the design guidelines and design responses in these cases is to ensure that the design and siting of new development has regard to the concept of view sharing and, where possible, existing views from adjoining buildings and from public areas. It is envisaged that for the applicant this would primarily involve identifying existing viewlines and considering the location of the building, or higher parts of the building, on the site.

It was determined through the review process that in most parts of the townships, views to the water are an important aspect of the character, and should be considered by architects and designers when formulating new development proposals. However, it should be remembered that providing for the *reasonable sharing of views* is just that. It is not about absolute protection of existing view lines, and it is just one consideration in the assessment of a planning permit application.

Having discussed the defensibility of provisions that make reference to the reasonable sharing of views with other planning professionals, we are aware of many successful VCAT cases in Lorne and Fairhaven, and a precedent case in the Shire of Flinders. These VCAT decisions include a consideration of views only when it is expressed in the planning scheme, and place an emphasis on a *sharing* of views and what is *reasonable*.

Space Between Buildings

As discussed, an important aspect of the character of the townships is the relationship between the townships and the surrounding landscape. In many parts of the towns vegetation is a dominant feature when viewing the settlements from the coast or from within the developed area. If it were not for the coastal vegetation surrounding dwellings, then they may begin to take on the appearance of more urban or suburban places, and lose their visual context. It has been established that views out to the coast and beyond are an important aspect of township character, and one factor in retaining these views is the space between buildings.

Glimpses of the surrounding landscape are often obtained through the spaces between buildings, and in coastal towns these spaces are often wider than in city suburbs. Space between buildings provides the ability to sustain vegetation and permeable areas. The issue of space between buildings has been considered and included in the Design Guidelines in the form of objectives referring to the "spaciousness" of the dwelling settings, and design response statements requiring buildings to be set back from one or more side boundaries.

In addition, minimum lot sizes and maximum site coverage requirements are important adjuncts to the retention of the spaciousness of these townships. Buildings in these townships often commenced as 'holiday shacks' and are consequently smaller than standard houses. Newer houses have, until recently, tended to also retain smaller footprints, partly due to their status as holiday or retirement dwellings and partly due to the limitations of the land resulting from its slope and the potential for land slip. While newer dwellings are tending to be larger and are more often permanent dwellings, most have retained a smaller footprint, tending to utilise second storeys to increase floor area while maximising views.

The smaller footprint of the dwellings allows for larger setbacks and smaller site coverages than are found in other townships and larger settlements. The average lot sizes need to be retained in these towns to ensure that the minimum lot size (taken usually to be the permit trigger of 300 sq.m. in the planning scheme) is not regularly adopted in the townships. Small lots would not enable the retention of the vegetation and space around buildings so important to the character of the townships. In the case of these coastal townships, other relevant considerations for land owners include land slip and wildfire management, both of which add to the need for larger lots.

Building Form

The form of buildings in the townships is another character element that sets the townships apart from other urban or suburban places in Victoria, and should continue to be responsive to the coastal location and significant landscape setting. In that sense, the dwellings in the townships, and the overall form of the townships should not dominate or overwhelm the surrounding landscape. The buildings should be responsive to the topography, with the townships having the impression of being 'tucked in' to the landscape at the base of the Otway foothills.

Height 'limits' are often used in these areas to ensure consideration of the long distance views of the township in proposals for buildings that will extend beyond the typical tree backdrop. In these instances the height limit is intended to provide the opportunity for review of the design, and assessment of the extent to which the overall township vision, preferred character and other design guidelines are met.

In that regard, the design of buildings over a height where buildings may protrude above tree canopy height, or a proposed significant change in the natural ground level to accommodate development, should be closely scrutinised. The appropriate tool for this purpose is discussed later (see Chapter 6) but will trigger the assessment of new development against the Design Guidelines, which require articulation of the upper levels of dwellings, and minimal excavation.

Communication about Character

The focus of a character study is on preparing policies and guidelines for inclusion in the planning scheme. What is sometimes overlooked is the importance of first describing and communicating clearly the preferred character to which applicants should be trying to contribute. Successful communication of this information is an essential first step on the path to delivering better design in residential areas.

For this reason, Planisphere places a strong emphasis on the content and design of the Precinct Brochures. They are intended to provide essential information to applicants and planning officers, and to look appealing to local residents and others. They are produced in a manner that enables them to be readily copied or otherwise made available at the planning enquiry counter, and other relevant locations.



6. Implementation

6.1 Implementation Context

Existing Zoning

Township Zone (TZ)

The study area for this Neighbourhood Character Study is the Township Zone in each of the four towns. The objectives of the zone currently allow for some consideration of neighbourhood character in development applications. Among the objectives for the zone are

- to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns; and
- to encourage residential development that respects the neighbourhood character.

As noted previously, the schedule to the Township zone enables the varying of several of the Clause 54 and 55 ResCode standards. This has implications for both planning and building approvals. The schedule changes can introduce standards that are more stringent or more flexible than the default standards at Clauses 54 and 55.

The schedule allows the Council to specify variations to Clause 54 and 55 ResCode standards for street setback, building height, site coverage, side and rear setbacks, private open space and front fence height. However, if inserted current advice has been that the varied standards must apply to all land within the Township zone throughout the municipality. None are currently specified in the Colac Otway scheme.

Particular Provisions

A number of the existing particular provisions of the Planning Scheme may relate to neighbourhood character in the four towns.

Specifically, Clauses 54 (construction of one dwelling on a lot) and 55 (construction of two or more dwellings on a lot and residential buildings) are relevant. These clauses have the following specific objectives:

- To implement the State Planning Policy Framework and the Local Planning Policy Framework, including the Municipal Strategic Statement and local planning policies.
- To achieve residential development that respects the existing neighbourhood character or which contributes to a preferred neighbourhood character.
- To encourage residential development that provides reasonable standards of amenity for existing and new residents.
- To encourage residential development that is responsive to the site and the neighbourhood.

These clauses contain specific provisions for site and neighbourhood setting, neighbourhood character and amenity among others.

Existing Overlays

Three existing overlays are current in the study area; these have some relevance to neighbourhood character of the townships to the extent that they influence the design and location of development. The interaction between these existing overlays and the proposed implementation options from this study is of particular importance.

Erosion Management Overlay (EMO)

All of the land in the four townships is covered by EMO1. The purpose of this overlay is to protect areas prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes, by minimising land disturbance and inappropriate development. Under the EMO a permit

is required for all buildings and works, vegetation removal (with some exceptions) and subdivision. There are specific reports required to accompany any application including information about the site and the proposal. The decision guidelines refer to the potential impacts of the development on erosion, landslip and groundwater issues.

Wildfire Management Overlay (WMO)

Most of the land in the four townships is covered by the WMO. The purpose of this overlay is to identify areas where the intensity of wildfire is significant and likely to pose a threat to life and property. The objective is to ensure that development that is likely to increase the number of people in the area :

- Satisfies the specified fire protection objectives.
- Does not significantly increase the threat to life and surrounding property from the threat of wildfire.

The Overlay requires a permit for a specified range of uses including Accommodation (as defined), and for subdivision. The permit requirement can be waived for alterations involving less than 50% of the floor area of the existing building, or for buildings or works associated with a dwelling with a floor area less than 100 sq.m. The decision guidelines relate to the potential impact of the buildings and works upon the protective features, access for fire fighting, water availability for fire fighting, open space areas and vegetation location in relation to fire safety and wind breaks.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay (LSIO)

A small patch of land near Kennett River has a LSIO. The purpose of this overlay is to identify land in a flood storage or flood fringe area affected by the 1 in 100 year flood or any other area determined by the floodplain management authority. The objective is to ensure that development maintains the free passage and temporary storage of floodwaters, minimises flood damage, is compatible with the flood hazard and local drainage conditions and will not cause any significant rise in flood level or flow velocity.

The overlay requires a permit for all buildings and work, including a fence and roadworks, and subdivision. The decision guidelines relate to the potential effect of the buildings or works on the flow and quality of water.

Implications for this Study

Under these existing overlays, permits are currently required for all buildings and works, except in some cases, outbuildings, in the towns. While the permit triggers could not be more encompassing, the purpose of the overlays is not to consider the design of dwellings, and the way they respond to the neighbourhood character issues. Therefore it is questionable whether Local Policy relating to the design of buildings will provided adequate weight through these overlay provisions.

6.2 Statutory Implementation Considerations

Statutory implementation of this Neighbourhood Character Study is only one part of the total package of implementation techniques. However, it is perhaps the most important as it legally binds the Council, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and the community to consider the outcomes of the Study in the development arena.

The options proposed for any particular precinct in the study area must be chosen bearing in mind several critical considerations.

These considerations include:

Character: The types of characteristics identified in the precinct and their relative significance in Shire-wide and regional terms.

What is it about each precinct that makes it distinctive, and to what extent is this distinctiveness important on a local, regional or state level? Assessment of this aspect is supported by the extensive survey material gathered during this Study, which identifies the consistency and form of the various characteristics and enables comparisons across the study area. The consultants' experience in these types of studies throughout the State enables a regional and State context to be assessed.

Threats : The extent to which the important characteristics within each precinct are threatened.

Each Preferred Character Statement includes an assessment of the types of threats that are possible, overlaid with an understanding of the development pressures occurring. Information was sought from the Council officers to determine the types of pressures occurring in the townships. The areas subject to greatest change, where development is occurring most frequently, are sometimes, but not always, those where important elements are under greatest threat.

ResCode : The residential provisions (ResCode), including the extent to which a Local Policy will influence the types of development that may pose a threat to the achievement of the preferred future character.

In the case of the townships, Local Policy could be quite effective as all development requires a permit under the EMO (see above). As mentioned in the previous section, however there is a legal argument that Local Policy related to matters other than those covered by the Overlay will either not be implementable or as effectively implementable. This requires further consideration of other options.

Community Acceptance : The likelihood of community acceptance of new controls over some forms of development and the extent of community concern about the loss of particular aspects of the character of the precinct.

In this case we have found a general acceptance of control over built form and vegetation. In most cases a permit is already required for these matters, and it is understood that the townships have a special character and other physical and environmental issues that require consideration by the Council.

Colac Otway Planning Scheme : Strategies, policies and controls already contained in the Colac Otway Planning Scheme. These are identified in Chapter 2.

Approval : The likelihood of success of approval of any planning scheme amendment to introduce statutory controls by the Minister for Planning (and an independent State government appointed Planning Panel if required).

There is little point in recommending measures to the Council that are unlikely to be approved. The most important aspect of this consideration is the need to determine which areas are those that require additional planning controls and which areas can be successfully managed with existing controls and the range of other non-statutory implementation techniques available. There are however other contextual issues that must be considered such as State policy and directives, and issues raised previously by Panels in making recommendations on other similar planning scheme amendments. A Planning Panel will also examine all of the above issues in their deliberation about a planning scheme amendment, if submissions are received and referred to a panel.

All these factors must be taken into consideration in developing the recommended approach to statutory implementation of the Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study.

6.3 What should the Planning Scheme controls achieve?

The starting point for discussion of implementation options is to understand exactly what we want the Colac Otway planning scheme controls to achieve.

The key neighbourhood character elements identified in the study area are detailed in Section 4.3 'The Character of the Townships'. The main issues for neighbourhood character protection in the study area have been expanded from this analysis and are identified in Section 5.3 'Key Character Issues'.

The township Visions, Preferred Character statements and Design Guidelines prepared for each precinct have been developed to address all of these issues and this should form the basis of the Planning Scheme strategy, policy and/or controls.

As a summary of the Preferred Character statements and Guidelines developed for each precinct, the Planning Scheme should achieve the following :

The distinct landscape setting of the coastal townships

- Reference should be made to the unique landscape quality of the coastal townships. This should be included in the MSS, local policy or Overlay control objectives.
- The controls should reflect the importance of vegetation of each Precinct and enable the consideration of the landscape setting and distant views of the proposed development within the landscape to be considered.
- Additional indigenous species may need to be nominated for protection and replanting throughout the townships. This would require work by an indigenous vegetation specialist outside the scope of this study. Information of this nature could be published in an advisory brochure, or added the planning scheme at a later date.
- Landscaping plans should be submitted with all applications to demonstrate retention of significant trees or understorey and planting of new native vegetation as required.

Built form

- In the steeper topography of the townships, built form should merge with the sloping contours of the land and vegetation remain the dominant character element. Built form may need to be carefully sited to maintain this characteristic.
- Buildings should not protrude above the dominant tree canopy, or a maximum of 8 metres. Low scale buildings with low pitched roofs should be encouraged. This may require varying the ResCode standard that allows buildings up to 12 metres, as an adjunct to the Council's existing policy.
- Careful design and use of materials and colouring of buildings should be considered to reduce the buildings' distant visibility.

Subdivision and minimum lot size

- Greater control over subdivision or the form and siting of dwellings is required. This will ensure that the low density style of development and the dominance of landscape over the neighbourhood character, rather than buildings, is maintained.
- The methods for achieving this are to set a minimum lot size and establish conditions for subdivision.
- The following minimum lot sizes have been determined through analysis of the lot sizes within each Precinct and the average size of all lots in each. The minimum lot size is set at a level that equates with a majority of lots and is considered to adequately accommodate a dwelling with an appropriate site coverage and with adequate boundary setbacks. An average lot size is considered necessary for larger subdivisions of 4 or more lots, that equates with the average found throughout the precinct. The detailed spreadsheets are included in Appendix 4.

- The resulting minimums are shown in the table below:

Precinct	Minimum lot size (sq.m.)	Average lot size if 4 or more than 4 lots created (sq.m.)
Wye River 1	800	900
Wye River 2	800	1000
Kennett River 1	600	700
Kennett River 2	900	1100
Separation Creek 1	600	800
Skenes Creek 1	900	1300
Skenes Creek 2	600	700

Space around dwellings

- In order to maintain the sense of space around dwellings minimum setbacks from side boundaries should be set to reflect the average side and rear setbacks of the study areas and to provide sufficient space to plant vegetation that will screen buildings from each other, and from long distance views. This will require either varying the ResCode standards that allow buildings to be built to the side boundary or including overriding requirements in an Overlay.

Site coverage and permeability

- Maintenance of the low site coverage typical in these townships will allow substantial landscaping around each building.
- The maximum site coverage for the Precincts should be determined by examining the typical site coverage and footprint size of existing dwellings in each, and establishing a benchmark that would ensure the dwellings with larger footprints are discouraged. This can be cross checked against the minimum lot size requirements to ensure that the site coverage requirements continue to enable a reasonable/typical size dwelling to be constructed. In general the site coverage will be substantially lower than the ResCode standard of 60%, and therefore the controls should either vary the ResCode standard or override it through an Overlay.
- An analysis of the current site coverage found in each of the Precincts has determined the following maximum site coverage standards are appropriate to meet the preferred neighbourhood character statements in each. The detailed spreadsheets are included in Appendix 4.
 - Wye River Precinct 1 – 20%
 - Wye River Precinct 2 – 20%
 - Kennett River Precinct 1 – 20%
 - Kennett River Precinct 2 – 20%
 - Separation Creek Precinct 1 – 25%
 - Skenes Creek Precinct 1 – 20%
 - Skenes Creek Precinct 2 – 25%
- A minimum area of permeable land also needs to be specified to ensure that the amount of land not covered by hard surfaces is minimised and thus the land available to sustain vegetation is maximised. Again this will either require variation to or overriding of the 20% ResCode standard which is too low for these townships based on existing and preferred patterns.
- The maximum area occupied by buildings and hard surfaces should be set at a level 10% above the building site coverage maximum. This allows for driveways where runoff requires a solid surface and an outdoor paved area.

Coastal character

- The use of appropriate materials is an important contributor to the township character, and design guidelines should actively encourage the use of non-masonry materials, and the inclusion of 'light' building styles with the inclusion of open balconies and balustrading.

Frontages

- Open frontages should be encouraged across all of the study area to maintain the spacious, woodland character.
- Front fencing if required for safety or the containment of animals should be low and open, such as the rural post and wire.

View sharing

- The ability to see the ocean or coast from dwellings is considered an important part of the character of the townships by the local community. While the maintenance of views is not generally a given in planning tools, the principle of 'sharing views' in locations such as these townships is now accepted in many planning schemes as discussed in Section 5.3.

6.4 Overview of Statutory Options

The statutory options range from a minimalist 'guideline' approach to a highly regulatory approach involving the implementation of large parts of the Study through the planning scheme. Statutory options provide one part of a total package of implementation techniques. It is perhaps the most important as it legally binds the Council, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) and the community to consider neighbourhood character objectives identified through a Study such as this.

The recommendations for statutory implementation must be framed having regard to the residential provisions inserted into every planning scheme in Victoria (collectively known as ResCode). The 'ResCode' package introduced new optional tools that Councils can, in theory, introduce into their own schemes, as well as new controls.

In 2000, amendments were made to the State Planning Policy Framework to introduce neighbourhood character as a key issue in the consideration of the appropriateness of new development, equal with urban consolidation objectives. Preferred neighbourhood character forms the basis of the new residential provisions, with Councils encouraged to develop Local Policy to guide the consideration of neighbourhood character in the discretionary implementation of the new controls. In addition, Councils have been given a wider range of tools to introduce provisions that reflect the particular character of parts of their municipalities. The Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study will provide an invaluable resource and support for the introduction of controls of this nature.

Having regard, therefore, to the statutory framework within which the recommendations of the Study must be implemented, there are several possibilities for the implementation of neighbourhood character objectives within the development control system.

Many of these options, outlined below, can be used together, however each requires individual consideration:

- Adopt the Study, including the Precinct Brochures, as a Council guideline only, with no formal statutory weight. (Not recommended other than temporarily during exhibition of an amendment)
- Alter the MSS in the planning scheme to include elements from the Study. (Recommended)
- Incorporate the entire Study into the planning scheme (ie Incorporated Document). (Not recommended)

- Refer to the document in the planning scheme (Reference Document). (Recommended)
- Extract parts of the Study and Design Guidelines to form a local policy in the planning scheme (Clause 22 in the Local Planning Policy Framework). (Recommended but maybe not be required)
- Alter the schedule to the Township zone to vary certain standards of ResCode. (Not recommended)
- Implement parts of the Design Guidelines relating to the form of buildings through a Neighbourhood Character or Design and Development Overlay for particular character areas. (Recommended)
- Implement parts of the Design Guidelines relating to vegetation and the balance between tree canopy and buildings through a new or existing Vegetation Protection or Significant Landscape Overlay for particular character areas. (SLO recommended)

The advantages and disadvantages of each of these options are summarised below:

Council Guideline

This option suggests that the Council resolve to adopt the findings of the Study and the Precinct Brochures for use in the assessment of planning applications, but not to proceed further with amending the planning scheme. The advantages of this option are:

- The Council could commence using the guidelines immediately.
- The Council would have the ability to change the guidelines as it wishes.
- No planning scheme amendment would be required.

The significant disadvantage is that the Study will not be of assistance at VCAT as the brochures will not be considered to be of relevance to the consideration of applications without some reference in the planning scheme. The Department of Sustainability and Environment actively discourages stand-alone Council policies. Other than as a temporary measure, while an amendment was being prepared and exhibited, this option would not be recommended.

Municipal Strategic Statement

The Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) is the Council's primary statutory tool, and it must provide the strategic rationale and context for all statutory controls introduced into the Colac Otway Planning Scheme. Reference to this Study should be included in the MSS, and it should provide the overarching objectives relating to the protection and management of neighbourhood character in the townships.

There are only advantages in ensuring that the MSS contains the correct strategy to provide an umbrella to all other related provisions.

Incorporated Documents

In this option the whole or part of the Study, (or the Precinct Brochures that have been prepared) are incorporated into the planning scheme and become a statutory document. The whole incorporated document therefore has statutory weight, and this may be considered an advantage in some situations.

The significant disadvantage of this approach is that a planning scheme amendment process is required to change any part of the incorporated document. This is cumbersome and time consuming, therefore the contents of the incorporated document must be relatively 'timeless' and not contain information that might become

irrelevant or out-of-date readily. Some parts of the brochures may be considered to fall within this category.

In addition it is unclear whether incorporation of the Study report or the Precinct Brochures would be supported by the Department of Sustainability and Environment, as the Practice Note on incorporated and reference documents discourages the incorporation of documents that contain criteria, performance measures or decision guidelines. Should the key elements of the brochures be included in Local Policy (see below), this would be superfluous as well as cumbersome. However there has been some advice from the Planning Panels and DSE sources that incorporation of documents such as the Precinct Brochures may be supported in preference to a long Policy in the scheme.

In general this approach is not recommended due to the disadvantages mentioned above, however it is an alternative that can be considered if necessary to put the brochures into full effect.

Reference Documents

This option involves referring to the Study report and the Precinct Brochures in the planning scheme, and thus they would be known as 'reference documents'. The advantage of this option is that it provides some statutory weight to the Study at VCAT. However, the Department of Sustainability and Environment has advised in the past that reference documents are to be considered as 'background' only, and should not contain policies or guidelines that assist in determining upon planning applications. The VPP Practice Note on Incorporated and Reference Documents indicates that the relevance of a reference document may be challenged, therefore any proposed prescriptive design standards that are required to protect neighbourhood character must be part of the Planning Scheme, not only part of a reference document. However, referencing of the Study and brochures is a sound and proper approach in conjunction with other statutory implementation mechanisms.

Local Policy

Inclusion of a policy in the scheme provides the highest level of strategic direction, next to the MSS itself, and therefore the Council's objectives and the measures against which all applications will be assessed are clear. It is noted that a Local Policy forms part of the planning scheme, and therefore an amendment is required to insert it into the scheme, and to alter it if necessary in future.

The inclusion of a Local Policy within the Local Planning Policy Framework (LPPF) enables the provision of policy guidance for the assessment of planning applications. The Local Policy can serve to provide a set of general considerations that apply to all proposals within the residential areas for which a planning permit is required, or more preferably the specific guidelines that apply to each precinct. The Policy should include the key elements of the neighbourhood character Precinct Brochures. The objectives, preferred character statements and guidelines can assist in designing and determining development applications.

An alternative favoured by the DSE is the inclusion of the preferred character statements in the MSS, and requirements and standards in Overlays. This is considered to obviate the need for a Local Policy. We still consider inclusion of the design guidelines for each Precinct in a Local Policy as an appropriate tool to include guidelines to guide discretion. However without a Local Policy the Overlay provisions will refer to a reference document for guidance.

Schedules to the Residential Zones

The new residential provisions include the ability for Councils to alter certain residential provisions for the whole Shire. These include: street setback, building height, site coverage, front fence height, side and rear setbacks, and private open space. The changes apply to single dwellings under the Building Act, as well as medium density housing and single dwellings for which a planning permit is required.

As these changes can only be enacted across the whole Shire, the use of schedules is limited to those matters that can be applied to all residential situations across the municipality. In the case of an area of such diverse character as the Colac Otway Shire, these situations are probably non-existent. In addition, changes that affected the whole municipality can not be justified by a Study that only covers the coastal townships.

Overlays

Neighbourhood Character Overlay

The Neighbourhood Character Overlay (NCO) is part of the suite of tools to implement neighbourhood character considerations, provided by the new residential provisions (ResCode). Use of the NCO has some advantages and some disadvantages, therefore its use has to be carefully considered in each circumstance.

The advantages to the use of the Neighbourhood Character Overlay are that it provides the opportunity to:

- Alter the provisions of ResCode in relation to medium density and single dwellings both within and outside the planning system. Single dwellings that do not comply with the altered ResCode provision will require a 'report and consent' from the Council. Medium density housing developments will continue to require a permit from the Council and will be assessed using the amended standard. An approval can still be issued, in both cases, for a development that does not comply with the altered standard.
- Include tree removal controls.
- Include demolition controls.
- Control all development and works (with some exceptions).

The disadvantages of the NCO are:

- There is no ability to exempt certain types of development (eg single dwellings or buildings under a certain height), other than outbuildings and swimming pools. Therefore all buildings in the Overlay area will require a planning permit. This potentially places a great administrative burden upon the Council wherever the Overlay is applied. In this case this is not an issue as all buildings and works already require a permit under the existing EMO provisions. There will however be additional administrative burden in the assessment of applications. This may be countered by a reduction in VCAT appeals due to the clarity of the controls.
- The tree controls are limited to trees over 5m in height. An additional overlay is required to control other vegetation.
- It does not provide the ability to require a permit for front fences (although the standard for front fence height can be varied). An additional Overlay is required to control front fences.
- It can apply only to small, well defined areas where there is strong justification for additional controls of this nature. In this case the townships are small, well-defined areas.

The application of the NCO should be to areas that need the controls in order to protect or change the identified character, as determined by the preferred character statement and the identified threats to the preferred character. The Practice Note on

Using the Neighbourhood Character provisions encourages the use of the NCO where neighbourhood character is the primary concern. It does however state that the DDO and other Overlays may also be used to implement neighbourhood character objectives.

Design and Development Overlay

A Design and Development Overlay (DDO) requires that a permit be obtained for all development within the area covered (some types of development can be exempted). It ensures the implementation of the detailed guidelines in the consideration of all development in that area. A DDO can control, by permit, elements such as height, setback, site coverage, fences and development within certain distance of tree trunks.

It is noted, however, that a DDO does not control the demolition of buildings. This control is only available through the Heritage Overlay and the Neighbourhood Character Overlay. Introduction of a DDO requires delineation of the exact area to be covered; it cannot be applied to the whole Shire or all residential areas. It must be applied discriminatingly.

The Department of Sustainability and Environment has advised that the use of DDOs for the sole purpose of neighbourhood character implementation is not encouraged. The VPP Practice Note – Using the Neighbourhood Character Provisions in Planning Schemes states that a DDO has some similar features to the NCO, but is more appropriately applied to promote specific urban design outcomes for a particular site or area. This study demonstrates that urban design outcomes are not the principal neighbourhood character element. The DDO is not specifically a tool for dealing with residential character and does not provide a specific framework for the variation of standards in Clauses 54 and 55 in the way that the NCO does.

However, DDOs are considered appropriate for areas where minimum lot sizes or mandatory height limits are warranted, or change is encouraged and no other mechanism would achieve the desired outcome. There are examples of DDOs in place to manage minimum lot sizes and the height of buildings, particularly in coastal areas.

Vegetation Protection Overlay and Significant Landscape Overlay

A Vegetation Protection Overlay (VPO) or Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO) can require a permit for removal of trees; and it can apply to all trees, trees over a certain trunk diameter or height or to any of native, indigenous or exotic vegetation. The only limitation is the ease of use and enforcement of the provisions. In order for a VPO or SLO to be justifiable, the vegetation or landscape must be demonstrated to be of significance to the character of the area.

The VPO is primarily aimed at situations where the vegetation itself is of significance. The VPO can only require a permit for vegetation removal, and not for buildings and works. It is preferable that VPO controls be confirmed by a parallel study that identifies the environmental significance of vegetation. A Vegetation Protection Overlay is therefore not recommended by this report, as this study has considered only the aesthetic contribution of the vegetation, not the environmental significance.

The SLO has the distinct advantage of providing the opportunity to control the type of vegetation, the types of buildings and works and fences that require a permit, as necessary. As the EMO already requires a permit for vegetation removal this will not greatly impact upon the workload of the Council, although the consideration of applications may be more complex as the neighbourhood character objectives will require investigation and determination. The VPP Practice Note – Using the Neighbourhood Character Provisions in Planning Schemes states that:

'Sometimes vegetation may be the only feature of neighbourhood character defining the urban area. If the principal objective is to identify and protect vegetation for its contribution to the character of an area, overlays such as the

VPO and SLO can be used instead of the NCO to protect these valued aspects of neighbourhood character.'

This study has demonstrated that vegetation is a highly significant feature, although not the only feature, of the neighbourhood character in the four coastal towns. Other significant features of neighbourhood character such as low site coverages and generous building setbacks assist in achieving the retention of vegetation also.. Therefore it is appropriate to make use of an SLO to protect vegetation, and to ensure that the siting of buildings has regard to potential impact on vegetation and utilise other tools to assist in the objective of retaining vegetation.

6.5 Directions from DSE & Planning Panels

DSE Advice

Planisphere has held discussions with relevant officers from the Department of Sustainability and Environment in order to obtain the most up-to-date advice regarding departmental opinion and requirements. A Practice Note 'Understanding Neighbourhood Character' was issued by the Department in 2001. This Practice Note provides general information regarding the matters to be considered in implementing the provisions of ResCode that require regard for the surrounding character in development applications. It provides a list of elements of the surrounding neighbourhood that may be of relevance to the preparation of a site analysis and design response. In so doing, it provides some indication of the types of characteristics of an area that may be identified in a character study. It is by no means definitive nor exhaustive in this regard.

A new VPP Practice Note 'Using the Neighbourhood Character Provisions in Planning Schemes' was published in July 2004, well after commencement of the Study. It provides general guidance about the tools available to enact neighbourhood character controls, and we believe our work conforms with the requirements contained in the Practice Note.

The DSE advised, and release of the Practice Note confirmed, that local policy cannot be used to substitute alternate ResCode provisions, and it should not repeat provisions of ResCode or other requirements of the planning scheme. The 'Writing Local Policy' Practice Note must be followed in preparing policy. It is the intention of the DSE that should alternate ResCode provisions be proposed, an appropriate Overlay or schedule to the residential/township zone should be utilised, provided sufficient justification can be provided.

Planning Panel Reports

A number of planning scheme amendments have been undertaken by other Councils to incorporate neighbourhood character objectives within the planning scheme. Planning Panels, established to hear submissions regarding the amendments and make recommendations to the Council about the submissions and the suitability of the amendment, have been held in most cases. Some of these Panel reports provide lessons for the implementation of neighbourhood character objectives.

Two Panel reports, for neighbourhood character planning scheme amendments in the Cities of Knox and Banyule, have highlighted the importance of the strategic context of neighbourhood character, and ensuring that the Council's MSS contains strategic rationale for character policy. In particular it is important to ensure that housing strategies, such as future housing needs and locations for additional housing if required, have been clearly identified and do not conflict with the neighbourhood character policy and/or controls. While these Panel decisions relate to metropolitan examples, it is anticipated that the DSE will be equally interested in ensuring that the future of coastal townships is managed to accommodate predicted growth.

Preparation of a housing strategy would therefore ideally be undertaken in parallel with the neighbourhood character review. This matter is strongly advocated by the DSE in various forums including the 'Using the Neighbourhood Character provisions' Practice Note..

Where provisions other than a local policy are proposed, such as overlay controls or changes to the residential zone schedule, the Banyule decision also highlighted the need to demonstrate that the provisions of ResCode combined with a local policy on character, were not adequate. In cases where single dwellings do not otherwise require a planning permit, it is of particular importance to demonstrate that single dwellings are of equal or greater concern in achieving neighbourhood character objectives, than medium density housing, as policy can influence decisions in any case where a planning permit is required.

Panel reports and subsequent DSE decisions regarding amendments affecting Ocean Grove and Hedgeley Dene in the City of Stonnington highlight that the implementation of Neighbourhood Character Overlay controls will only be considered over small, discreet and highly justified areas with clear neighbourhood character objectives, and under demonstrated threat.

Many of these matters are summarised in the "Review of Planning Panel Reports in Respect to Neighbourhood Character" report prepared by Planning Panels in October 2003. The report discussed the findings of Panels in the appropriateness of the various VPP tools for implementing neighbourhood character. The Practice Note released in July 2004 took into account a number of the comments by Planning Panels.

6.6 Recommendations

Planning Scheme Changes

There are a number of actions that should be taken to improve the guidance provided to all parties involved in the development approvals process in the townships. These actions will collectively assist applicants to design more sympathetic buildings; nearby residents, Council officers and Councillors to assess the suitability of development proposals; and where necessary, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal members to determine upon planning appeal cases in the townships.

Aims

The aims of the statutory approach should be:

- To give the Study recognition within the planning scheme, as an important background document;
- To ensure the Preferred Future Character Statements are contained within the planning scheme (either in the MSS or policy);
- To enable the design guidelines contained in the Character Precinct brochures to be used as an assessment tool for all applications in the applicable Township zones;
- To ensure that, where necessary, additional statutory controls are provided to require permits for buildings and structures, works or tree removal so that the findings of the Study, particularly in relation to Preferred Future Character, can be enacted.

Specifically, the following changes are recommended to have effect to all planning applications in the areas of the four townships covered by the Study.

MSS

Include reference to the this Neighbourhood Character Study in Clause 21.04-13 of the MSS. The current MSS is under review, and is not ideally structured for the

purpose of inserting the main outcomes of the Study, but can be modified adequately in the interim. It is proposed that CI 21.04-13 be altered to contain the neighbourhood character Visions for the townships, and the preferred character statements for each Precinct. An addition should also be made to CI 21.02 to add a dot point related to the need to protect the landscape and neighbourhood character qualities of the townships.

Local Policy

The standard approach in the past for the implementation of our neighbourhood character studies has been the inclusion of a Local Policy containing the preferred character statements and Design Guidelines for each precinct. In this instance the DSE has advised that the inclusion of the township Visions and the preferred character statements in the MSS is the preferred approach, in addition to various Overlays, and reference of the Study and brochures.

The existing Coastal and Otway Ranges Townships Policy (cl. 22.05 applies to all land located within Skenes Creek, Wye River, Separation Creek and Kennett River in the Township zone. It also applies to all other coastal townships in a number of other zones, outside the study area of this Study. It is considered that this Policy should be amended to exclude reference to the townships covered by this Study, and the references in the MSS, so as not to add further layers of consideration.

Reference

Reference the Study and all Precinct Brochures to enable use of the additional supporting information contained in the Study report and brochures in assessment of applications. The Study and brochures will be referenced in the MSS (CI 21.04-13) and in the Overlay schedules.

Significant Landscape Overlay

As identified earlier the SLO has the ability to control vegetation removal and buildings and works. This enables the consideration of buildings and works in relation to their potential impact on vegetation retention.

It is recommended that the Significant Landscape Overlay be applied to all the study areas to require a permit for all buildings and works and vegetation over 0.5m circumference at 1 metre. This is latter measure is preferable to a height measure as a number of coastal trees are short, due to the climate and lack of deep soil. A planning permit is already required for almost all development within the townships, under the variety of other planning controls existing over the land. Therefore the proposed SLO schedule will add more decision guidelines, rather than more control to the planning process. Consideration of the primary issue of the dominance of the vegetation in the landscape and the potential impact of development on vegetation are enabled through this Overlay.

The SLO will allow closer scrutiny of development and will call up the objectives and design responses for the appropriate precinct, prepared as part of this Study through the reference document. This will ensure that issues integral to the character of the townships such as building form, view sharing and the relationship of buildings to landscape are considered. The SLO can also require that a landscape plan be provided with the application.

A SLO schedule is contained in Appendix 6.

Neighbourhood Character Overlay

The Neighbourhood Character Overlay is the appropriate tool for the implementation of the neighbourhood character objectives of the recommendations of the Study. The NCO enables the variation of ResCode standards that will assist in the assessment of

single dwelling and medium density housing applications. The following varied standards are proposed to achieve the outcomes required to achieve the visions and preferred character statements of the Precincts:

- **Front setback:** a minimum setback of 7 metres should be set to ensure that buildings have sufficient space at the front to accommodate large trees and provide a spacious setting from the street.
- **Building height:** the maximum building height should be set at 8 metres in accord with the Council's long held policy, and to ensure buildings are set below the tree canopy height.
- **Site coverage:** the maximum site coverage determined for each Precinct should be included here to replace the 60% maximum of ResCode.
- **Significant trees/Landscaping:** the area of land covered by a combination of buildings and hard surfaces should be limited to an area that is 10% above the area allowed for buildings alone. The landscaping requirement should encourage the planting of native and indigenous plants.
- **Side and rear setbacks:** the standard should be varied to ensure buildings are offset from boundaries a distance to allow for planting of vegetation and a spaciousness between buildings. A minimum of 3 metres from side boundaries and 5 metres from rear boundaries, coupled with an inclined plane for increased setbacks for higher buildings will minimise the visual impact of buildings as well as retain space for vegetation.
- **Walls on boundaries:** this standard should be varied to require a setback from boundaries in all cases.
- **Design detail:** the varied standard should include reference to materials and siting in accordance with the preferred neighbourhood character and the need to ensure buildings are visually unobtrusive.
- **Front fence height:** the standard should be varied to include reference to fences on adjoining properties. The ResCode standard heights are adequate.

The NCO should require a permit for outbuildings to ensure that this does not provide a loophole for buildings that could have an impact on the landscape. The NCO should invoke the option to require a permit for swimming pools as these can occupy a large area of land and often require an even larger area to be cleared of vegetation for construction and to reduce leaf litter in the water. The NCO should also invoke the permit for removal of trees (only applies to trees over 5m) to ensure this is considered in the context of the neighbourhood character overlay provisions.

As mentioned previously, a permit is already required for buildings and works under the EMO therefore the introduction of the NCO will place no greater burden upon the Council or land owners in terms of permit applications. However the introduction of the varied ResCode standards will impact upon the size and design of buildings, possibly curtailing the intentions of some land owners and requiring greater design consideration than previously.

A NCO Schedule for exhibition is included in Appendix 6.

Design and Development Overlay

The DDO schedule is required to require a permit for subdivision, introduce minimum lot sizes and invoke a requirement for a permit for fences. The minimum and average lot sizes applicable to each Precinct have been determined through an analysis of existing lot sizes. These should be included in the DDO as mandatory minimums. The decision guidelines for subdivision will refer back to the preferred character and design guidelines on the brochures.

Fences are noted as important elements in the Precincts as they are often not present, or are of a non-intrusive transparent style. The construction of post and wire style fences up to 1.2 metres can be encouraged by exempting them from a permit requirement. Decision guidelines should again refer back to the Precinct brochures.

A DDO Schedule for exhibition is included in Appendix 6.

All these actions will require an amendment to the Colac Otway Planning Scheme. This process is likely to take a minimum of six months.

Non-Statutory Actions

Non-statutory tools can also provide an important means of implementing Council's neighbourhood character objectives. These include design coordination in the public domain, community encouragement and education, staff skilling and design advice and statutory support. These tools are discussed further below.

Design Coordination

The impact of the public domain on the character of an area cannot be underestimated. Street tree planting, road, kerb and footpath treatments all have a significant impact on the character of the streetscape. While this Study was not asked to make specific recommendations about the public domain, decisions about changes or strategies will ideally have some reference to the neighbourhood context determined by this Study.

The best way of coordinating works in the public domain is to establish a coordination mechanism. This could take the form of an officer group with the following objectives:

- Coordinate all aspects of design in road reserves and other parts of the public domain.
- Build up a consistent character across defined local areas (preferably the precincts defined in the Neighbourhood Character Study).

The group would comprise representatives from various departments within Council (eg design and engineering, infrastructure, development approvals, strategic planning, street lighting, parks services etc) and would:

- Ensure that design decisions relating to a single street, park or other facility are consistent with the various strategies.
- Resolve conflicts, overlaps or gaps in the strategies.
- Establish guidelines for the conduct of public consultation about public domain design, with mechanisms designed to accommodate pressures for divergent treatments in every location within a strategic, consistent approach.

Community Encouragement and Education

Education and encouragement, partly by means of forming partnerships, is an essential aspect of implementation. The following strategies could be adopted:

- Education of real estate agents, developers and landowners generally.
- Education of design and building professionals.
- Encouragement schemes for 'good character' developments.

The kinds of techniques that could be used to give effect to these strategies could include:

- Information leaflets (eg indigenous vegetation)
- Workshops
- Award schemes
- Displays
- Media articles/events

The partnership aspect of this option could be fostered by bringing stakeholders with differing perspectives (eg residents and developers) together into the same forum.

This may be best accomplished independently of a contentious planning application with statutory time limits. A copy of the relevant Precinct Brochure could be included in 'resident kits' to reinforce the values and significance of the area and educate new residents and owners.

Staff Skilling and Design Advice

It takes time to come to grips with a topic like neighbourhood character. The Council's statutory planners need continued support and skilling to make the best use of this Study's recommendations. Correct approaches to site analysis, knowledge about acceptable design solutions, familiarity with architectural styles, and consistency of decisions are all important. Training sessions, workshops and review of current applications by urban design consultants are useful techniques. In addition, training may be required by other parts of the Council organisation where the recommendations impact upon public domain works designed and undertaken by engineering personnel or contractors in accordance with specifications prepared by Council staff.

Resourcing may be an issue in the implementation of the recommendations of this Study, as some recommendations involve more detailed assessment of design, may result in increased workloads for planning staff. The Council must be aware of this potential and monitor the effect of introducing new controls to ensure that implementation of the Study is effective.

Above all, the Council must determine to 'send out the right message' to the development community through consistent decision making as well as communication techniques discussed earlier. That message must foster an expectation that the best quality design is expected, and that applicants will be subject to delays or refusal if they fail to meet this expectation.

Statutory Support

The main vehicles for statutory support are the Design Guidelines, and the MSS changes and Overlays prepared as part of this project. Planning controls will also provide significant help, as will the community education and encouragement initiatives referred to above. However, there are allied or associated measures that can be taken. Possibilities include:

- Permit conditions.
- Better enforcement of planning conditions.
- Increased publicity about penalties.
- Active monitoring of works undertaken without permission (eg illegal carports, vegetation removal).
- Local Laws.

6.7 The Next Steps

The next step in implementing the recommendations of this Study is the exhibition of a planning scheme amendment that:

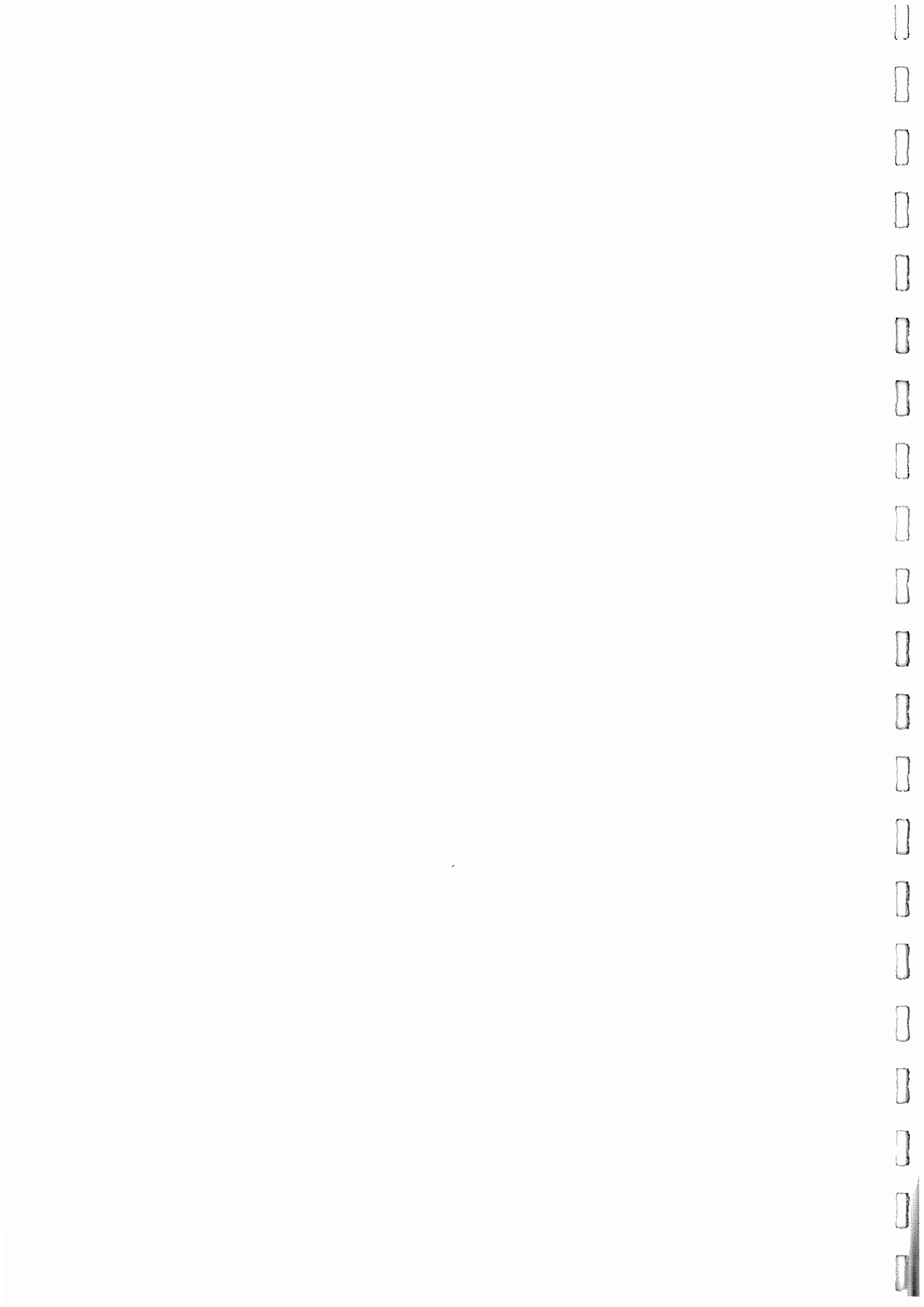
- Alters the MSS to add the neighbourhood character context and objectives, visions and preferred character of the Precincts, and reference to the Study
- Inserts the Neighbourhood Character Overlay into the Colac Otway planning scheme, adds a Schedule that varies the relevant ResCode standards and applies it to the townships
- Adds a new Significant Landscape Overlay and applies it to all the townships, that provides appropriate vegetation and building control to ensure the adequate consideration of vegetation
- Adds a new Design and Development Overlay to specify minimum lot sizes in the townships.

We are confident that this combination of strategy and controls will achieve the neighbourhood character objectives for these townships, and look forward to their introduction.



Skenes Creek | Kennett River | Wye River | Separation Creek

Appendices



Appendix 1 – Study Brief



Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River & Separation Creek
Neighbourhood Character Study

Quotations are sought for undertaking a Neighbourhood Character Study for the coastal towns of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek.

This study will follow on from the Apollo Bay/Marengo Neighbourhood Character Study.

In October 2002, a preliminary questionnaire was sent to all properties in the four towns. Council received a good response to the questionnaire, and the information has been compiled into spreadsheet which will be made available to the successful tenderers. Quotations are being sought to undertake the study to the point where it can be incorporated into the Colac Otway Planning Scheme.

Public consultation will be required, and it is suggested that at least two (2) workshops be conducted, one in the Colac Otway Shire, and one in Melbourne.

The study must be consistent and compatible with the Apollo Bay Neighbourhood Character Study in regards format and presentation.

Actions required:

- Inspections of each township.
- Data recording and consultation.
- Analysis and description of existing character of the towns.
- Establish preferred Character(s).
- Preparation of Draft guidelines, policies, principles and precincts.
- Preparation of a draft report and presentation/s to Council.
- Preparation of final report.
- Preparation of draft Planning Scheme amendment documentation suitable for exhibition.

Resources:

Council staff will be available to answer specific enquiries in respect to the project.

Project timing:

To be completed by 30th June 2004.

Project Management:

The project will be managed by Ron Mildren, General Manager, Environment and Planning, with day to day contact with Darren Frost, Planning Co-ordinator Colac Otway Shire.

Quotation:

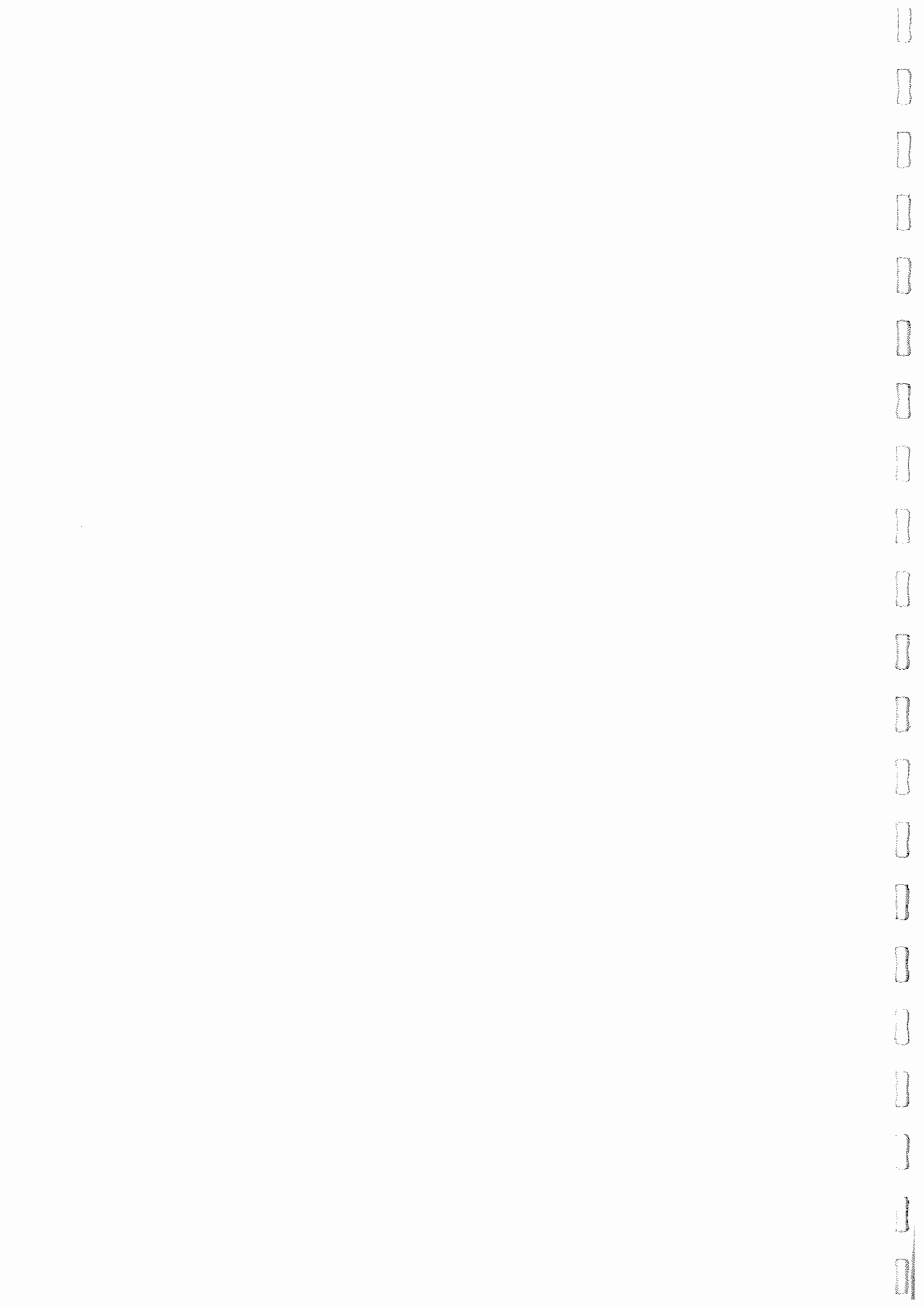
Quotations are being sought from selected consultants and are requested to be inclusive of all costs and disbursements itemised. Quotations must be received in writing by Colac Otway Shire by close of business on Friday 27th February 2004 and addressed to:

General Manager, Environment & Planning

Colac Otway Shire

PO Box 283

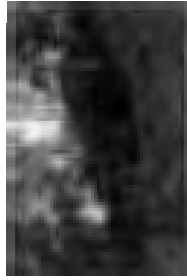
COLAC 3250



Appendix 2 – Draft Precinct Issues Papers

PRECINCT ISSUES PAPER Kennett River 1

Coastal Bush



TOWNSHIP DESCRIPTION

The Kennett River township is nestled into the vegetated ridges and hillslopes that form the Kennett River Valley. Two residential areas are separated by bushland and flatter, more open land around the River at the centre of the town. Views to bushy ridgelines and the ocean are available from many vantage points and are important character elements in the town.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct covers the majority of the residential parts of the township. It occurs in two discrete areas, both of which are characterised by varied contemporary (frequently elevated) houses tucked into remnant native forest. Native bush extends across frontage to the public domain where streetscapes are largely informal and roads are unsealed. Although much of the area is enclosed by wet native forest, some lots within the precinct afford views to the coast.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture is predominantly 1970s to present 'rural' coastal style (pole or elevated column construction) with some later 1850s-1970s 'rural' coastal style.
- Most lots are weatherboard, natural vertical or horizontal timber cladding with some fibro or 'hardiplank' rustic style. Occasional compacted iron cladding in newer dwellings.
- Height is frequently two to three storey or equivalent due to slope.
- Streets are variable, but mostly large with houses set in substantial vegetated grounds, although some dwellings are relatively close to the road (2-4m).
- Gardens are dominated by continuous remnant native bush throughout this precinct.
- Frontages are open with no front fences and dwellings are often screened by native vegetation, including canopy trees.
- Roads are unsealed with gravel swale drains, and informal native bush streetscapes that are largely indistinguishable from private frontages.
- Topography is steep and hilly throughout. Views from most dwellings are contained by bush, although some views to the coast are available.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Council's Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) outlines a strategy to provide a range of dwelling sizes and types to match the changing needs of the local community, concentrate residential development within existing urban areas.
- Clause 21.64-05 of the MSS provides the strategic direction for small towns in the Shire and outlines objectives to provide attractive and safe residential environments; strengthen the economic future of the communities; provide necessary infrastructure to meet these directions; and maintain and enhance the environmental qualities, among others.
- The Shire Housing Strategy (Clause 21.04-07 of the MSS) aims to improve the quality of urban areas by protecting and upgrading their character and to provide a diversity of residential accommodation consistent with needs of locals and visitors and the valued neighbourhood characteristics of defined areas.

EXISTING CONTROLS

- Township Zone (TZ) applies to the precinct. The purpose of this zone is to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns.
- The precinct is covered by an Environmental Management Overlay (EMO). The purpose of this overlay is to protect areas prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes, by minimising land disturbance and inappropriate development.
- Much of the precinct is also covered by Wildlife Management Overlay (WMO) to ensure that development within the specified fire protection objectives and does not significantly increase the threat to life and surrounding property from the threat of wildfire.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY/PRESSURES

To be provided by Council

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Kennett River Precinct 1 likes:

- Natural bush surrounds.
- Houses which blend with natural background.
- Spaces between dwellings.
- Varying styles.
- Sea views.
- Houses screened or set back from roads.

The community of Kennett River Precinct 1 dislikes:

- Houses too close together.
- Loss of gum trees.
- Large, elaborate houses on small blocks.
- Lack of maintenance of houses.
- Designs and colours not in keeping with bush / coastal setting.

PREFERRED CHARACTER DIRECTIONS

Maintain:

- Bushland character including canopy trees and bushy gardens.
- Large front setbacks.
- Diverse housing styles.

Strengthen:

- Consistency of bushy garden styles across the precinct.
- Native vegetation plantings in the public domain.

Change:

- Reduce visibility of dwellings from the great ocean road, including intrusion through the bush canopy.

DRAFT PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct will be dominated by continuous native bush, with dwellings set beneath remnant canopy trees. Frontages will be open and consist of diverse native understorey that screens views of buildings from roads. Dwellings will avoid prominent locations and ridgelines, and vegetation will be retained or replaced with any new developments. Innovative house styles will be encouraged of a scale, materials and colours that blend with the bush character and follow the topography. The informal bush character of the precinct will be assisted by the streetscape planting and lack of formal kerbing.

PRECINCT ISSUES PAPER Kennett River 2

Coastal Garden

© City of Greater Geelong



TOWNSHIP DESCRIPTION

The Kennett River township is nestled into the vegetated ridges and hillsides that form the Kennett River Valley. Two residential areas are separated by bushland and flatter, more open land around the River at the centre of the town. A small pocket of dwellings set on open cleared land occurs near Kennett River. Views to bushy ridgelines and the ocean are available from many vantage points and are important character elements in the town.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct encompasses dwellings that have been developed on previously cleared, flatter topography in the middle of the township, close to Kennett River. Houses are set large distances apart and low, mixed gardens with occasional canopy trees offer a sense of openness. In newly developed areas gardens are informal and grassy, or establishing. A lack of established vegetation means views to vegetated hillsides and the coast are available throughout.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture is a mix of 1950s to 1970s low-lying 'moderate' seaside style and contemporary, large and variable seaside style, often colourful, with large windows and verandahs.
- Materials are a mix of rendered brick, flush fibre, corrugated colourbond, painted weatherboard or hardplank.
- Height: dwellings are mostly two storeys throughout the flatter areas, and two storey or equivalent on the sloping edges of the precinct.
- Setbacks: at both front and side are highly variable, with dwellings appearing 'loosely scattered' throughout the precinct.
- Gardens have some mature canopy trees, with lawn and low-level exotic and native plants as understorey.
- Frontages are open with no front or side fences throughout.
- Roads are mostly sealed, with some unpaved cul-de-sacs.
- Streetcapes are informal, with some planted eucalypts.
- Topography is flatter around Kennett River, but slopes to steep at the edges of the precinct affording views to vegetated hillsides and the coast.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Council's Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) outlines a strategy to provide a range of dwelling sizes and types to match the changing needs of the local community, concentrate residential development within existing urban areas.
- Clause 21.04-05 of the MSS provides the strategic direction for small towns in the Shire and outlines objectives to provide attractive and safe residential environments; strengthen the economic future of the communities; provide necessary infrastructure to meet these directions; and maintain and enhance the environmental qualities among others.
- The Shire Housing Strategy (Clause 21.04-07 of the MSS) aims to improve the quality of urban areas by protecting and improving their character and to provide a diversity of residential accommodation consistent with needs of locals and visitors and the valued neighbourhood characteristics of identified areas.

EXISTING CONTROLS

- Township Zone (TZ) applies to the precinct. The purpose of this zone is to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns.
- The precinct is covered by an Environmental Management Overlay (EMO). The purpose of this overlay is to protect areas prone to erosion, land slip or other land degradation processes, by minimising land disturbance and inappropriate development.
- Much of the precinct is also covered by Wildfire Management Overlay (WMO) to ensure that development satisfies the specified fire protection objectives and does not significantly increase the threat to life and surrounding property from the threat of wildfire.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY/PRESSURES

To be provided by Council.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Kennett River 2 likes:

- Small, modest 'holiday style' beach houses.
- Modern, but not obtrusive dwellings.
- Coastal views and surrounds.

- The community of Kennett River 2 dislikes:
- Houses with little regard to environment.
 - Large dwellings with no space on block for trees.
 - Overshadowing.
 - Inappropriate colours.
 - Overbuilt small blocks.

PREFERRED CHARACTER DIRECTIONS

Maintain:

- Diverse housing styles
- Large setbacks and space between dwellings
- Intact vegetation backdrop

Strengthen:

- Landscaping surrounding dwellings
- Consistent coastal garden plantings to unite and soften the precinct

Change:

- Encourage the planting of canopy trees in private gardens to link the open areas to the vegetated backdrop and soften views from the Great Ocean Road
- Encourage substantial public domain landscaping and tree planting between the Great Ocean Road and the Kennett River shop

DRAFT PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct will consist of coastal style dwellings set amongst gardens of mixed species. A spacious garden character will be maintained by setting buildings apart and encouraging landscaping between dwellings. Dwellings will be carefully designed to be unobtrusive when viewed from roads. Planted and retained trees in both public and private domains will provide a sense of continuity through the precinct and visually link with the adjacent bushland areas.

PRECINCT ISSUES PAPER Skenes Creek 1

Coastal Bush



TOWNSHIP DESCRIPTION

Skenes Creek is a coastal hamlet set on rolling topography. A sense of openness is afforded by its cleared farmland setting and expansive views to the coast. A green wedge corridor along the Old Coach Road through the centre of the township links the town with a vegetated hillside backdrop.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct forms the green wedge which runs through the middle of Skenes Creek township. Houses are set amongst substantial native vegetation throughout, with larger lots between Skenes Creek Road and the Old Coach Road sustaining continuous native bush. Lots tend to have a stronger relationship with the vegetated ranges than the coast, with the exception of lots in the south of the precinct that front the Great Ocean Road. The native bush corridor is weakest at the Great Ocean Road frontage where recent clearing has removed vegetation.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architectural style is consistently 1950s to 1970s 'modern' stock style dwellings with some contemporary styles and 'modern' landscaping scattered throughout
- Materials are weatherboard or fibre except in the newer dwellings
- Roofs are gabled although near dwellings are modest, the steepness of the eaves and the slope
- Substances are limited to the large tree between Skenes Creek Road and the Old Coach Road where houses are set in vegetated bush. On smaller lots, substances are average providing sufficient screen to sustain vegetation
- Gardens are bushy rather than manicured mature canopy trees and recent understory plants including coastal acacia, planted bushy native gardens occur along Point Avenue and Oxley Street
- Frontages are consistently open with some rural-style front fences and minimal fence high
- Roads are consistently unsealed (except the lower sections of the Old Coach Road) with bare unsealed shoulders with no curbs or footpaths
- Topography is rolling to steep, with views to the hills above the township, although often are contained by vegetation. A few lots in the centre of the precinct offer open views to the coast

COUNCIL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Council Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) outlines a strategy to provide a range of housing types and to match the changing needs of the local community concentrate residential development in urban areas
- Clause 21.04-05 of the MSS provides the strategic direction for small towns in the Shire and outlines objectives to provide attractive and safe residential environments throughout the shire and to meet the community's needs for necessary infrastructure to meet these objectives and maintain and enhance the environmental quality of the shire
- The Shire Planning Strategy (Clause 21.04-07 of the MSS) aims to improve the quality of urban areas by providing and improving their character and to provide a policy of residential development consistent with needs of local residents and the wider neighbourhood characteristics of related areas

EXISTING CONTROLS

- Township Zone (TZ) applies to the precinct. The purpose of this zone is to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns
- The precinct is covered by an Environmental Management Overlay (EMO). The purpose of this overlay is to provide a means to manage land use and other land development processes by minimising land disturbance and inappropriate development
- Much of the precinct is also covered by the Shire Management Overlay (SMO) to ensure that development within the specified area does not have an adverse effect on the natural environment and to ensure that development is consistent with the Shire's planning objectives

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY/PRESSURES

To be provided by Council:

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Skenes Creek Precinct 1 likes:

- Trees, bush and natural vegetation.
- Mix of houses and styles.
- Houses which blend with the environment.
- Seaside character.
- Modest, older 'country style' houses.
- Large blocks with native bush.

- The community of Skenes Creek Precinct 1 dislikes:
- Loss of vegetation.
- Large houses on small blocks.
- Stark modern houses, unsympathetic materials.
- Dwellings which contrast with the landscape.
- Unkept, poorly maintained houses and gardens.
- High density buildings.

PREFERRED CHARACTER DIRECTIONS

- Maintain:
- Continuity of native bush along the Old Coach Road Corridor
- Dwellings with native vegetation without substantial screening

Strengthen:

- Vegetation setting of dwellings, particularly as viewed from the Great Ocean Road

Change:

- Increase native vegetation in public and private areas along the Great Ocean Road edge

DRAFT PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

The precinct will continue to form a native bush dominated wedge linking the Great Ocean Road to the hillsides behind the town. Houses will be set far enough apart to accommodate substantial native bush including canopy trees, and dwellings will be set beneath the vegetation canopy. The informal, semi-rural feel to the area will be retained by the lack of fencing, or use of rural style fences and frequent unmade roads. Views to dwellings in the precinct will be screened and softened by native vegetation in frontages to major roads, and in the public domain along road verges.

Coastal Garden



COUNCIL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Council's Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) outlines a strategy to provide a range of dwelling sizes and types to match the changing needs of the local community, concentrate residential development within existing urban areas.

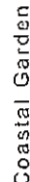
economic future of the communities, provide necessary

enhances the environmental qualities, among others the Shire Housing Strategy Clause 21 (01-07 of the MSS) aims to improve the quality of urban areas by protecting and improving their character and to provide a diversity of residential accommodation consistent with needs of locals and visitors and the valued neighbourhood characteristics of identified areas.

Overlay (EMO). The purpose is to assess erosion landslides or

- Township Zone (TZ)** applies to the precinct. The purpose of the zone is to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns. The precinct is covered by an Environmental Management Overlay (EMO). The purpose of this overlay is to protect areas prone to erosion, landfall or other land degradation processes by minimising land disturbance and inappropriate development.
- Much of the precinct is also covered by Wildlife Management Overlay (WMO) to ensure that development satisfies the specified fire protection objectives and does not significantly increase the threat to life and surrounding property from the threat of wildfire.

DEVELOPMENT ACT
To be provided by Council.



- PREFERRED CHARACTER DIRECTIONS**
- Maintain:**
 - Open, spacious coastal character
 - Views to hills and coast throughout.
 - Consistent footprints.
 - Diverse coastal styles
 - Strengthen:**
 - Mature plantings and gardens
 - Public domain plantings
 - Change:**
 - Soften interface with farmland and Sloanes Creek, Piedmont

This precinct will continue to be characterised by diverse c

This precinct will continue to be characterised by diverse coastal dwellings set amongst established gardens. The sense of openness will be maintained by setting buildings apart, minimising intrusive front fencing, encouraging consistency of building heights and protecting views to the surrounding hills and coast. The precinct will be united by consistent mature plantings of native and exotic coastal species in public and private domains.

DEVELOPMENT ACT
To be provided by Council.

To be provided by Council.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Skenes Creek 1 dislikes:

- Large, intrusive houses.
- Houses too big for blocks, or too close to the road.
- Buildings which block others' views.
- Poorly maintained dwellings.
- Bright or 'garish' materials.
- Unit developments.
- Urban or suburban style developments not in keeping with coastal character.

PREFERRED CHARACTER DIRECTIONS

Amplification;

- Open, spacious coastal character
- Views to hills and coast throughout
- Consistent rooflines.
- Diverse coastal styles

Stranglinen:

- Public domain plantings

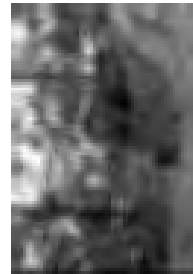
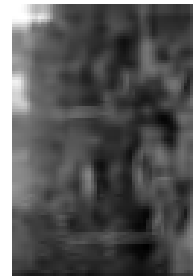
Change:

- **Sofion interface with farmland and Skanes Creek Precinct 1.**

DRAFT PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct will continue to be characterised by diverse coastal dwellings set amongst established gardens. The sense of openness will be maintained by setting buildings apart, minimising intrusive front fencing, encouraging consistency of building heights and protecting views to the surrounding hills and coast. The precinct will be united by consistent mature plantings of native and exotic coastal species in public and private domains.

PRECINCT ISSUES PAPER Wye River / Separation Ck 1 Coastal Bush



TOWNSHIP DESCRIPTION

Wye River and Separation Creek together form a loosely defined residential settlement at the base of the Otway hills. Two water courses, set in bushy vegetation divide three loosely defined residential areas. Housing is set on steep slopes above the Great Ocean Road, with many lots offering outcrops to the coast.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct is dominated by houses of mixed contemporary styles set on steep slopes amongst dense, wet native vegetation. The precinct occurs in two parts on the main ridgeline between Wye River and Separation Creek, and in a small pocket on the northern edge of the Separation Creek township. While dwelling styles are mixed across the precinct, the landscape setting open frontages and bushy gardens contribute to a consistent character in which houses are dominated by native forest.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture is commonly 1970s to present 'naive' coastal style, often with elevated column construction and low pitched roofs but occasional steep pitched or shaped roofs. Many dwellings have extensive deck and verandah areas.
- Materials are natural vertical or horizontal timber cladding with some terra or hardplane' rustic style and corrugated iron cladding.
- Height is frequently two to three storey or equivalent due to slope.
- Subsides are large but variable, 3-15 m at the front and rearward at both sides.
- Gardens consist of remnant native bush with a native understory canopy. Some or very few exotic plants occur.
- Footpaths are open and informal, with lush vegetation.
- Roads are commonly unsealed although there are some sealed roads. Streetscapes are informal and bushy with narrow verges and no curbs or footpaths.
- Topography is steep to very steep throughout. Many lots have outcrops to the ocean and surrounding ridgelines, although these are frequently masked or blocked by vegetation.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Coastal Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) outlines a strategy to provide a range of dwelling sizes and types to match the changing needs of the local community, concentrate residential development within existing urban areas.
- Clause 21.64-05 of the MSS provides the strategic direction for small towns in the Shire and outlines objectives to provide attractive and safe residential environments, strengthen the economic future of the communities, provide necessary infrastructure to meet those directions and maintain and enhance the environmental qualities among others.
- The Shire Housing Strategy (Clause 21.64-07 of the MSS) aims to improve the quality of urban areas by protecting and improving their character and to provide a diversity of residential accommodation consistent with needs of locals and visitors and the valued neighbourhood characteristics of identified areas.

EXISTING CONTROLS

- Township Zone (TZ) applies to this precinct. The purpose of this zone is to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns.
- The precinct is covered by an Environmental Management Overlay (EMO). The purpose of this overlay is to protect areas prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes by minimising land disturbance and inappropriate development.
- Much of this precinct is also covered by Wildlife Management Overlay (WMO) to ensure that development satisfies the specified for protection objectives and does not significantly increase the threat to life and surrounding property from the threat of wildlife.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY/PRESSURES

To be provided by Council.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Wye River / Separation Creek Precinct 1 likes:

- Bush gardens and tree canopy.
- Houses that are sympathetic to their environment and blend with surrounding bush and native vegetation.
- Large blocks.
- Low innovative designs and materials.
- Diversity of styles; mix of old and new.
- Well maintained houses.

The community of Wye River / Separation Creek Precinct 1 dislikes:

- Large buildings and colours and materials which stand out in native vegetation (e.g. shiny materials).
- Older, poorly maintained shacks.
- Buildings which crowd and impact on privacy.
- Lack of space between dwellings.
- 'Suburban' style dwellings.

PREFERRED CHARACTER DIRECTIONS

- Maintain.
- Bushland canopy trees and understorey.
- Varied interesting housing styles.
- Bush dominance over built form across the precinct.
- Subsides and space between dwellings.

Strengthen:

- Bushy gardens, planting near houses (subject to wildlife management requirements).

Change:

- Houses providing from bush canopy especially where visible from the Great Ocean Road.
- Remove weeds and exotic vegetation.

DRAFT PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct will be characterised by dominant native bush that forms a consistent canopy creating a link to the adjacent bushland. Dwelling grounds will be sufficient to maintain native bush both as canopy and understorey. Buildings will be set beneath the canopy, and appropriately sited and designed so as to follow the contours of the site, and be in view when viewed from the Great Ocean Road. The informality of the streetscapes will be retained by the lack of front fencing, frequent unmade roads and remnant vegetation.

PRECINCT ISSUES PAPER Wye River / Separation Ck 2 Coastal Garden



TOWNSHIP DESCRIPTION

Wye River and Separation Creek together form a loosely defined residential settlement at the base of the Olway hills. Two water courses, set in bushy vegetation divide three loosely defined residential areas. Housing is set on steep slopes above the Great Ocean Road, with many lots offering outlooks to the coast.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct consists of the longer settled parts of both Wye River and Separation Creek. Dwellings in this precinct have been developed on previously cleared land, or on the edge of bush. According, houses are more visible than in other parts of the Wye River / Separation Creek and there is a sense of openness to the sea while views to vegetated hillfaces provide containing landscape features to the precinct.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture is a mix of 1950s to 1970s 'modern' seaside style (many of which have been extended) and larger contemporary seaside styles often with large windows and verandahs.
- Materials are mixed weatherboard and fibro, except for a scattering of contemporary materials including steel.
- Height is varied with large areas of single-storey dwellings in Separation Creek, and predominantly two-storey for equidistant due to slopes in Wye River.
- Setbacks are large and variable at the front (8-15m) and moderate to large on other side.
- Gardens are low exotic in some parts (especially associated with 'modern' seaside dwellings in Separation Creek), with mixed open spaces gardens in the remainder, including canopy trees where the precinct abuts bush (e.g. The Boulevard, Wallace Street).
- Frontages are frequently open, although a few low front fences occur.
- Roads are commonly sealed, with no kerbs or footpaths and low open, or exotic nature strips.
- Topography is rising to steep, with open views to the coast and vegetated hills which surround the town.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Council's Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) outlines a strategy to provide a range of dwelling sizes and types to match the changing needs of the local community, concentrate residential development within existing urban areas.
- Clause 21.04-05 of the MSS provides the strategic direction for small towns in the Shire and outlines objectives to provide attractive and safe residential environments; strengthen the economic future of the communities; provide necessary infrastructure to meet these directions; and maintain and enhance the environmental qualities among others.
- The Shire Housing Strategy (Clause 21.04-07 of the MSS) aims to improve the quality of urban areas by protecting and improving their character and to provide a diversity of residential accommodation consistent with needs of locals and visitors and the valued neighbourhood characteristics of identified areas.

EXISTING CONTROLS

- Township Zone (TZ) applies to the precinct. The purpose of this zone is to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns.
- The precinct is covered by an Environmental Management Overlay (EMO). The purpose of this overlay is to protect areas prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes, by minimising land disturbance and inappropriate development.
- Much of the precinct is also covered by Wildlife Management Overlay (WMO) to ensure that development satisfies the specified fire protection objectives and does not significantly increase the threat to life and surrounding property from the threat of wildfire.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY/PRESSURES

To be provided by Council.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Wye River / Separation Creek Precinct 2

- likes:
- Mixture of old and new.
 - Adjacent bushland.
 - Simple, older, beach style houses.
 - Colours and materials which fit with bush / coastal setting.
 - Interesting architecturally designed new houses.
 - Views to bush and seascape.
 - Natural materials and innovative design.
 - 'Holiday' atmosphere.
- The community of Wye River / Separation Creek Precinct 2 dislikes:
- Brick 'suburban' dwellings.
 - New buildings with no flair and character.
 - Materials and colours which stand out.
 - Older, neglected houses and poorly maintained properties.
 - 'Massive' water tanks.
 - Dwellings too large for blocks – crowding.

PREFERRED CHARACTER DIRECTIONS

- Maintain:
- Large open landscapes and space between dwellings.
 - Canopy trees where they occur
 - Diverse seaside housing styles
- Strengthen:
- Garden and streetscape plantings and consistency of vegetation
- Change:
- Soften the precinct with substantial tree plantings of appropriate local coastal styles, especially where the precinct adjoins Wye River / Separation Creek Precinct 1.

DRAFT PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct will consist of a mix of low, coastal style dwellings and newer coastal styles in established gardens. Dwellings will be of materials and colours that reflect the coastal setting, and designed and sited so as to reduce intrusion to views from roads, public spaces and adjacent dwellings. Establishment of native and coastal trees in public and private gardens will unite the precinct and provide visual links to the surrounding bushland.

PRECINCT ISSUES PAPER Wye River / Separation Ck 3 Coastal Bush



TOWNSHIP DESCRIPTION

Wye River and Separation Creek together form a loosely defined residential settlement at the base of the Otway hills. Two water courses, set in bushy vegetation divide three loosely defined residential areas. Housing is set on steep slopes above the Great Ocean Road, with many lots offering outflows to the coast.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct lies on steep topography to the south of Wye River. Dwellings occur amongst wet native forest, although redgums and horecas are frequently visible through the canopy from the Great Ocean Road. Commanding views to the coast are available throughout.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture is currently 1970s to present simple coastal style (with extensions) when built or elevated culture construction. Some contemporary rustic look coastal / bush dwellings also occur.
- Materials are frequently weatherboard or vertical timber cladding with some fibre or hardplank rustic style.
- Height of dwellings is frequently three storey equivalent due to steep slopes.
- Substrate are heavily vegetated but mostly a narrow, foresty than dense at the front and extensive to generous at the rear (20m).
- Gardens are mostly 'frontage' rustic bush with occasional ornamental feature plantings. A small area of low level exotic vegetation is found near Wye River Falls.
- Fences are open with no fence line throughout.
- Roofs are shales in some (e.g. along Marley Road), and underlain in the remainder. Structures are bushy and informal with eels visible.
- Topography is steep throughout with expansive views to the coast (particularly Star Court and Marley Road). A vegetated ridge line contains it to prevent it to the west.

COUNCIL STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- Council's Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) outlines a strategy to provide a range of dwelling types and styles to match the changing needs of the local community to encourage residential development within existing urban areas.
- Clause 21.04-05 of the MSS provides the strategic direction for small towns in the Shire and outlines objectives to provide attractive and safe recreational environments; encourage the economic future of the community; provide necessary infrastructure to meet these directions; and maintain and enhance the environmental quality of the area.
- The Shire Housing Strategy (Clause 21.04-07 of the MSS) aims to improve the supply of urban areas by increasing and preparing to a higher level to provide a high level of residential accommodation consistent with needs of local and visitors and the valued neighbourhood characteristics of the local area.

EXISTING CONTROLS

- Township Zone (TZ) applies to the precinct. The purpose of this zone is to provide for residential development and a range of commercial, industrial and other uses in small towns.
- The precinct is covered by an Environmental Management Overlay (EMO). The purpose of this overlay is to protect areas prone to erosion, landslip or other land degradation processes by maintaining land disturbance and development to a minimum.
- Much of the precinct is also covered by Wildlife Management Overlay (WMO) to ensure that every man-made structure, the spread of the protection objectives and area not significantly impacts the threat to the old surrounding property from the threat of erosion.

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY/PRESSURES

To be provided by Council.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Wye River / Separation Creek 3 likes:

- Variety of housing styles.
- Unobtrusive buildings that are beneath the tree line.
- Simple, older style holiday houses.
- Beach character.
- Well kept and tidy properties.
- Views and environmental features (bush and coast).

The community of Wye River / Separation Creek 3 likes:

- Old and run down houses.
- Un tidy blocks.
- Urban style houses (e.g. 'gabled roofs').
- Large buildings which dominate the block and impact on neighbours.
- Bright colours and materials which contrast with the surroundings.
- Closely spaced housing.

PREFERRED CHARACTER DIRECTIONS

Maintain:

- Native vegetation where it occurs across the precinct.
- Overse holiday style.
- Large front and side setbacks.
- Dwellings set within and around established native vegetation.

Strengthen:

- Native vegetation and canopy tree cover.

Change:

- Reduce visibility of dwellings from the Great Ocean Road by encouraging tree planting in public and private domains.

DRAFT PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

Dwellings in this precinct will be set beneath an established and dominant, native tree canopy. Space around dwellings will be sufficient to maintain trees and understorey. Dwellings in prominent locations when viewed from the Great Ocean Road will be designed and constructed of materials which reduce distant visibility. Retention and planting of canopy trees in the public domain and around dwellings will be encouraged to establish a consistent tree canopy.

Appendix 3 – Community Consultation

SUMMARY NOTES

First Round of Community Forums in Melbourne and Wye River (July 2004)

COMMUNITY FORUM 1 – MELBOURNE

Wed 21 July 2004 : 7.00-8.30pm : Albert Park Conference Centre, L4 163 Eastern Rd

Separation Creek

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- Fairly accurate
- Cypress and Norfolk pines important – issues as to whether can / should be replaced
- Direct neighbours ought to be consulted when considering the future of a tree
- An important character element is no fences between properties
- Water tanks are a nice feature
- Not HAPPY about being in the same precinct as Wye River – distinctive difference – no commercial activity / tourism etc.

Review the community values: Are these correct?

- Like interesting architecture styles are OK as long as they are sympathetic and respectful of environs – i.e.. housing and settings
- Creek – belongs to the community – more accessible – remove the blackberries
- Nervous about saying dislike new buildings with no flair and character

What should the Preferred Character be

- Ought to be more controls over the location of water tanks
- Appropriate location of garbage bins
- Vegetation: exotic plants ok, in combination with native vegetation

Wye River Group 1

Consider the township and precinct descriptions. What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- Existing hotel and general store
- Camping and caravan park – existing
- Lifesaving facilities
- No multi-unit developments / lots
- CFA facilities
- Predominantly residential

Review the community values: Are these correct?

- Precinct 1
- Disagree with bush garden; bush environment instead
- Like the natural environment to be complemented with the built environment
- Precinct 2
- Agree with current description
- Council needs to maintain council owned land
- Disagree with simple, older beach style houses
- Precinct 3
- Don't like simple, older style holiday houses
- Don't like unobtrusive buildings beneath the tree line being noted – would like better definitions
- Dislike weeds in public spaces

- Dislike bins being left out on streets

What should the Preferred Character be?

- No further development for all precincts
- Need to define "allowed materials" for buildings
- Look at 8m overall height – too restrictive? In some cases. → Needs to be looked at individually
- Precinct 2 – disagree with substantial tree plantings due to possible loss of views
- Remove power poles – request for underground
- Request for TV antennas

Wye River Group 2

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- "Contained within ridgeline" – loosely wrong adjective
- Mixed styles not necessarily contemporary
- Bushy vegetation should emphasise indigenous
- Not always generous space between houses although there should be
- There are different precincts – we would like the bushy continuity

Review the community values: Are these correct?

- Maintain unmade roads – no sealing (otherwise slippage and drainage problems and neighbourhood character lost)
- We agree with community values Precinct 1
- We like unobtrusive houses not dominating blocks – low building imprint to block area ratio (should be maintained and enhanced)
- We like houses to be sympathetic with land, not to need to excavate land in order to build the house
- Community values (likes and dislikes) should be common to all precincts

What should the Preferred Character be?

- Maintaining existing residential amenity, not commercial development
- New properties should not impede existing views of properties across the whole township
- Maintenance of canopy across all precincts
- More rigid control on tree removal with tree replacement where trees have been removed
- More noxious and environment weed controls
- Any development to be contained within ridgeline as they are currently contained
- No more land opened up for subdivision
- No multiple or cluster developments
- No clearing for views
- No fences
- No bins on roads
- Bushland canopy maintained
- Make sure pub and camping ground deal effectively with their effluent
- Maintain tanks and reticulated water (long term environmentally sound)
- Small, undeveloped village ambience with no more development
- Colour schemes sympathetic to coastal and bush setting
- Strict control on house building – minimal excavation
- Concrete driveways (Against?)

Kennett River Group 1

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- 2 – 3 storeys – actually predominantly single storey on poles (block elevation)

- Height restrictions should be in force

Review the community values: Are these correct?

- Would like underground power and no street lights
- Like spaces between dwellings / maintain low density
- Like recognition of lack of resources / infrastructure – i.e. Sewerage / town water
- Like low density – defines desired character of area
- Dislike Lack of consideration for reasonable amenities of existing dwellings – eg. Views
- Dislike → subdivision → medium → high density – Should be medium block size
- Dislike wheelie bins

What should the Preferred Character be?

- "Beneath" should be "among"
- Ridgeline should be sensitively on block
- Re-plant / revegetate rather than landscape
- No dual occupancy dwellings
- Dissuade commercial developments – sleepy hollow is the attraction
- Noxious weed control – eg. Blackberries
- Further development of wetlands area

Kennett River Group 2

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- Missing wetlands from summary – role in waste management
- Upcoming issue of town sewerage
- Areas of bushland retained within town
- Commercial accommodation facility in Hazel Ct – imposing on landscape and neighbourhood
- Building height increasing in recent constructions – against wishes of residents and planning guidelines
- Power poles and underground power – mixture of
- Two street lights – obtrusive

Review the community values: Are these correct?

- We value a quiet family environment (safety of children on the road and on the beach)
- Quality of natural environment – quality of unspoiled and clean ecology – clean river
- Adequate facilities for day visitors – public toilets
- No licensed premises in township
- Dogs should be controlled.
- Many wild species in townships, eg. Overgrowth of weed species along the river
- Dislikes:
- Degradation of the environment (natural vegetation and landscape and weed control – eg. Ragwort, Blackberries)
- Uncontrolled sewerage disposal into drains, river and subsequently into the ocean
- Loss of rural and bush town "feel"

What should the Preferred Character be?

- Enforce existing planning controls – in relation to inappropriate development, eg. wetlands and large scale commercial dwellings (guest house type)
- Enforce and control sewerage disposal (appropriate)
- Retain small scale commerce – no commercial business

Skenes Creek Group 1

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- The "creek" is the overall outstanding element of our district
- Precinct #3 as on the map should remain as such (not as #2)

- Regarding #2 Precinct Description – it is partly correct only, as #3 is ocean oriented and twice as steep, #2 is oriented towards bush and / or ocean

Review the community values: Are these correct?

- #1: Regarding "likes" – all okay
- #1: Regarding "dislikes" – stronger emphasis on no overdevelopment / dual occupancy
- #2: All ok (as is written) but need to infill with upper canopy eucalypts / Acacia melanoxylon (Allocasuarina verticillata) to compensate for tree removal in the old school ground and future losses (right down to Ocean Rd Coastal Reserve)

What should the Preferred Character be?

- Add: soften interface with farmland
- Add: Strengthen Old Coach Rd as heritage, well-vegetated road
- Replace Cypress trees with Allocasuarina verticillata
- Sewerage will alter the demand for land, therefore strip development along Ocean Road – must be curtailed!

Skenes Creek Group 2

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- Suburb? (nothing? Commercial) – Separation from Apollo Bay now a major advantage
- Infill between Apollo Bay and Skenes Creek
- Communication between Apollo Bay foreshore community and Skenes Creek
- Road safety

Review the community values: Are these correct?

- Eco-sensitive architecture
- Building height absolutely non-negotiable
- Non dual occupancy
- Grotesquely ugly power poles – should be underground
- No subdivision of existing standard block size 50' x 120'
- No commercial / rentable properties
- Improve and seal [roads]
- Fix the car park

What should the Preferred Character be?

- No comments

Skenes Creek Group 3

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- Good description
- Things to change:
- The way boundaries are drawn (ie. Precinct 1 and 2)
- Review notes on perceived boundaries, especially Surf and Ozone Ave (attached map)

Review the community values: Are these correct?

- Coastal Bush – Things to add:
- Roadside gardens
- Unpretentious
- Gravel roads – no bitumen
- Absence of traffic
- Narrow roads – retain country laneway feeling
- No high fences / no barriers to views
- Small and intimate community – neighbourhood feeling
- Quietness / peacefulness
- Connection with local farms / forest

- Absence of unit development / high density development
- Planted boundaries – bird habitat
- No more land opened up for development
- Coastal Garden – Things to add:
- Appropriate bush / tree planting – bird habitats
- Limit paving (hand paved) – stop run-off
- Informal / planted boundaries

What should the Preferred Character be?

- Additions:
- Coastal Bush – ok, Coastal Garden ok
- No commercial development, creek protection, underground power

COMMUNITY FORUM 2 – WYE RIVER

Wed 23 July 2004 : 7.00-8.30pm : Wye River Surf Life Saving Club, Wye River

Wye River – Separation Creek (Group 1)

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- Afraid for wildlife
- Maintain old growth trees eg. Nesting hollows for parrots, possums
- Speed restrictions on internal roads
- Dwellings appropriate for these bush areas in:
 - Size
 - Impact
 - Density of housing
 - Car parking
 - Safety for through traffic / emergency vehicles
 - Privacy

Review the community values: Are these correct?

No comments.

What should the Preferred Character be?

- Restriction of future development / subdivision to one house per building block – no multi developments
- Maintain our 'bush' environment
- Houses / colours to blend in with this environment
- Fire protection – requires enforcement
- Protect indigenous vegetation
- Encourage planting of Australian natives
- Educate residents regarding environmental weeds

Wye River – Separation Creek (Group 2)

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- Strongly encourage the planting of native vegetation
- Ban the planting of Cypress, Pine, Pittospermum etc
- Retain Otway Forest canopy
- Retain the low impact, camouflaged housing; not red roofs etc, sympathetic to the environment
- Place powerlines underground
- No multi-unit developments on residential blocks
- Retain present boundaries

What should the Preferred Character be?

- No further encroaching on the forest
- Relationship between the building and the size of the block
- Consideration of road surfaces
- Lighting – minimal street lighting

Kennett River (Group 1)

- No ribbon development
- Borders of the town
- No further Crown land sold off
- Preservation of wildlife
- Banding of trees (some)
- Ecologically sensitive tourism – B&B's possible, motel – NO

- Fire prevention presence – fire truck?
- Consideration of minimal fencing for the sake of wildlife
- Consideration of road surface preferences
- Define minimum block size
- Appropriate building size to site coverage ratio
- Encouragement of native species in new gardens

Kennett River (Group 2)

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

Precinct 1 (Ridge / Cassidy)

- Distinctions even within this precinct
- Minimal clearance and excavation c/f more recent developments – more clearing, more excavation

Review the community values: Are these correct?

- Retain as much of the natural environment as possible – retain trees, minimal excavation: agree but important that it be implemented
- Natural bush surrounds
- both on blocks and surrounds
- to feel part of the surrounding state parks and reserves
- Removal of blackberries important
- Agree with likes and dislikes

What should the Preferred Character be?

- 3 Agree with "maintain", agree with "strengthen", Add "change" to "maintain" or "strengthen"

Skenes Creek

Consider the township and precinct descriptions: What should be the *vision* for the townships?

- No comments

Review the community values: Are these correct?

- Likes:
- Village atmosphere
- Houses are sympathetic and environmentally blending
- Observe setbacks
- Lots of native vegetation
- Introduction of Vegetation (native) overlay
- Casual non-commercial feel
- Underpass (pedestrian) on Great Ocean Rd
- Houses blend with coastal character
- Prolific native vegetation
- Dislikes
- High-density over-development
- High buildings
- Dominant large houses
- Lack of vegetation protection
- Limit units / flat developments
- No through traffic along Old Coach Rd
- Tall trees
- Stark, modern glass houses

What should the Preferred Character be?

- No comments

SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS

Precinct Issues Papers – July/August 2004

Name	Comments	Response
John Hunter Separation Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In recent times, buildings for which approval have been given are totally out of character with the settlement Hate to see proliferation of cement, bricks and pillars like some of the monstrosities which now scatter Eastern Hill Standards set by 'pole' house on the corner of Olive Street and Downey residence illustrate the character to aspire to in the long term. Concern that Council only exercises authority over wastewater / sewage, land slip and roof colours. Separation Creek is a beach holiday treasure for recreational activities and is no place for status symbols or suburbia similar to that in Melbourne View of permeant residents should be paramount. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted Agree. Will investigate as 'good practice' example. Study will provide new tools for Council to exercise control over developments. Noted. Agree. Both permanent and temporary residents have been involved in this study.
Robert Gaudin Separation Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The charm of Separation Creek is based on it being commerce free with no income producing services. Cypress trees area a characteristic of many seaside towns along GOR would like what remains of cypress trees to be preserved along the Great Ocean Road as they can be identified with an era of Australian seaside towns. Not all trees need to be native – some exotic trees are acceptable and enhance the character of the area. The Creek is an important focal point, should be looked after and made more attractive and accessible to the community –water flow should be restored and regarded as a natural resource belonging to everyone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of commercial facilities will be noted in description. Noted, although differing opinions about exotic vegetation, including Cypress trees were expressed at the community forums. As above. Will add to description and township vision.
Juliet Le Feuvre Wye River WRSCPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average block size in Wye River / Separation Creek is small – therefore the more blocks are developed, the more neighbours will impinge on each other Community values clearly identify the wish to maintain the 'bush character' of the townships and the desire for buildings to be unobtrusive, secluded and well away from each other The impact of weeds on native vegetation is a serious threat to the precinct as the character of the vegetation and its ability to support wildlife is impacted upon. There is no acknowledgement of commercial activity or public open space which should be a part of the study Design Guidelines need to be strengthened where they deal with issues of size of developments, setbacks and maintenance of bush character and native vegetation. Key challenge is implementing the study through the planning scheme. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree, guidelines for setbacks, and building 'site coverage' will be articulated. Agree, will be developed further in guidelines. Noted, will add to description. Strictly speaking these are outside the study area (the township zone). Will mention. Noted, will review Design Guidelines for consideration of these issues. Agree. Implementation options to be presented at the next forum.
Mary and Blair Dixon Wye River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive aspects of Wye River The houses amongst the trees Birds and koalas Informal feeling of the buildings No direct sewage line into the sea Negative aspects of Wye River Evidence of green on the rocks suggesting leaking of effluent into the sea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. Will review community values although, not all of these can be maintained / managed under this neighbourhood character study or the planning scheme recommendations.

Name	Comments	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The "Castle" (rounded brick house) above the caravan park • Non-native gardens • Any growth must be consistent with our heritage. 	
David Henshall Wye River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gravely concerned that denser and bulkier developments, especially on small blocks will destroy the values that people come to the area to experience • Many buildings aggressively dominate the visual environment despite policy documents and guidelines such as the Victorian Coastal Council's "Siting and Design Guidelines". Would like more emphasis on achieving good design. • The current process should result in an outcome that ensures that Wye River and Separation Creek do not become further degraded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. Will reflect in community values / guidelines. • Existing guidelines will be reviewed in compiling our more detailed, precinct specific guidelines. • Agree.
Ron McInnes Wye River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The wooded rural atmosphere is very much a part of Wye River and should be maintained. • Persons who purchase land should be able to develop it but under strict council control in terms of tree removal and possible land slip problems. • Parking must be taken into consideration when granting permits for new development. • There should be more thought put into sewerage, although with new septic systems being developed, this may ease future problems • It is essential that animal and bird life be given a fair go and habitat left intact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. Addressed in preferred character statements. • Agree. Controls for land slip beyond the scope of this study. • Parking is beyond the scope of this study. • Noted, only general comments about sewerage will be made. • Agree. Habitat will be noted as important.
John O'Connor Wye River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submitted his objection to a development proposal at 23 Iluka avenue, Wye River, citing concerns about site coverage, bulk and form; loss of sunlight; loss of privacy; existing outlooks from buildings; vehicle access; external lighting; noise; building envelope; and slope destabilisation. • In response to certain proposed developments in Wye River, dwellings that appear to occupy the entire permitted building envelope could result in undue loss or diminution of amenity including the town's character as a seaside low-impact village. • Site coverage for all proposed developments should be brought into scale with most or all other single dwellings in Wye River. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. Issues of bulk and form, outlooks, external lighting and building envelope will be addressed in guidelines. Others are to be addressed elsewhere. • Noted. Will consider in formulating Preferred Character Statement and guidelines. • Site coverage will be addressed in guidelines.
R A Larsen Kennett River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area should retain its natural rural character with buildings no greater than two storeys in height. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. Will address in guidelines, although some concern amongst community that there should be flexibility due to slope.
Kerry and Paul Davey Kennett River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is concern over the future of Kennett River Caravan Park, which is a picturesque environment that should be maintained at all costs. • New homes currently being constructed towards the rear of the shop are congested and lacking in trees, however there is admiration of the development of the wetlands which has occurred in recent times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted, although the caravan park is in the Public Use Zone, and outside our study area. • Noted. Wetlands will be added to description.
Faye Harris Kennett River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need recommendations about keeping the size of the town to present boundaries, to maintain present character of the town, preserve wildlife, because of fragile nature of terrain. • Road surfaces need to be maintained to avoid landslip. • Site coverage is important consideration. • Description of town: more recognition of tourist facilities, surfing community, need for toilet block. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. Development must be contained by ridgelines. This will be mentioned although extent of township zone is for structure plan. • Noted. Beyond the scope of current study. • Agree, will address in guidelines. • Noted.

Name	Comments	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triangle of land beyond last row of housing (Gerard Court) needs careful consideration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines will seek to address generally concerns about development of this block.
R D Gebert Kennett River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kennett River is a charming, quiet place Trees along the Great Ocean Road are progressively growing making it difficult to cross the road safely and obstructing views to the ocean The swamp at the front near the main road which was meant to be public open space is hideous and is unkempt and overgrown for most of the year Development that appears dubious in its ability to meet council regulations and maintain local character is most frustrating – residents are very much at the mercy of the council in terms of what is built. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. Agree -planting in public domain should consider safety. Views will be addressed. Noted. Noted. This study aims to strengthen controls and provide greater guidance to Council to consider community values about neighbourhood character.
Pat Gebert Kennett River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree with community values shown, however a number of issues need to be addressed before they can be upheld. Large homes on small, unsuitable blocks are visually inappropriate and reduce the potential for tree planting and create problems for run-off. Planting of trees near the Great Ocean Road will take away ocean views for those in Area 2. At holiday time, crossing the road becomes extremely dangerous. Should the area between the store and the Ocean Road be planted with more trees, vision would be further impaired and danger of accidents would increase. The swamp area north of the store has changed the view of Kennett River from being attractive and peaceful to being ugly and unsafe in summer due to tall overgrown dry reeds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. Noted. Site coverage and space for planting to be addressed by guidelines. Noted. Planting to improve character of residential areas will be encouraged, with the aim to 'filter' and 'frame' views, rather than block. Agree. Planting in public domain must consider safety issues. Noted. Some contrasting views about the wetlands area expressed in these comments.
Christine Williams Kennett River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over the past decade council has allowed many things to take place in Kennett River that go against preserving the environment and the visual beauty of the area. 'City' mansion style houses on small blocks are an eye sore. Housing style should be commensurate with a village atmosphere The Swamp area at Kennett River should be eliminated and replaced with a useful community area. Trees should be encouraged between blocks, but the type or number of trees that will not impede views enjoyed by residents. No trees should be planted along the Ocean Road or between the Ocean Road and the store – low lying bush and scrub would be best for this area. No liquor licences should be granted at Kennett River. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted. This study aims to introduce planning controls and give greater guidance to council to approve applications. Noted. Will be addressed. Agree. Will be noted. Noted. Agree. Guidelines to cover this will be developed, with emphasis on encouraging vegetation first, and controlling the loss of views due to veg. See road planting above. Not relevant to this study.
Roger Taylor Skenes Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current state of Skenes Creek Precinct 2 is not necessarily what we want. Since the 1950's clearing of the largely bushy area has occurred and only a few remnant patches remain. Revegetation is difficult but necessary to make the area liveable for both humans and animals. Skenes Creek Precinct 2 is not homogeneous – the entire area is not garden – many areas have a lot of roadside bush and trees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree. The study will determine a Preferred Future Character statement, which aims to set a direction for the future. Noted. Agree. Will revise boundaries to reflect preferred

Name	Comments	Response
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsealed roads are part of the character and residents value the rustic feel they provide and the impact they have in reducing traffic volumes and speeds. • Local character is a reflection of history and to some extent local aspirations • Many would like to see more bush and trees strategically planted to preserve views so that Skenes Creek 2 looks like open woodland rather than forest. 	<p>bush character.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. Will note this in the guidelines • Agree. • Noted, views are important to the community, as is the native vegetated character.
Murray Champion Skenes Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unanimous feeling from all who attended [community forums] that the present respect for the native bush and natural environment should be continued. • Future dwellings should be designed to and required to sit as sympathetically as possible into the natural surroundings. • Submitted correspondence with Council regarding request for approval to implement an indigenous revegetation program for linear roadside reserves in Skenes Creek, and degradation of Old Coach Road by emergency vehicles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. • Agree, will address in guidelines. • Noted. Planting in the public domain (including roadsides) for character purposes will be encouraged. Road degradation is outside the scope of this study.
Mrs Johnston Skenes Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For all new developments poles at each corner of the building should indicate proposed height so the public can gain an idea of how it may impose on its surroundings. • In all planning decisions council fire officials should be consulted to fireproof coastal resorts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. • Agree. Guidelines will note the need to consider bushfire management issues.
Joan and John Brick Skenes Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quiet bush setting, limited development and restriction on commercial enterprises at Skenes Creek is what brings people to the area. • Constructions on the corner of Old Coach Road and the Great Ocean Road have led to disappointment as they reflect a metropolitan look found in places like St Kilda. • Most of these disappointing buildings have been built by developers who have dictated style and character. It is hoped that to maintain values, all buildings are constructed to blend in with the unique natural environment rather than stand out. • The vision for Skenes Creek should be to retain its coastal hamlet nature with development contained to maintain the native bush setting. • Views presented from both precincts indicated that the community wants the natural features retained and that buildings blend in with the natural scenery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. • Noted. • Noted. Guidelines will address character issues, and the desire to blend with environmental characteristics. • Agree. Will be reflected in township vision. • Agree. Will be reflected in guidelines.
John Doolan Apollo Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building heights should not be negotiable. • Headlands should not be developed and the Golf Course should remain as a "park". • There should be uncluttered foreshore access and no further parking. • Subdivision in the town and within narrow streets restricts access needed in emergencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted. • Some of these issues are outside scope of this study. Will pass on to Council.

SUMMARY NOTES

Second Round of Community Forums Melbourne and Wye River (Sept 2004)

COMMUNITY FORUM 3 – MELBOURNE

Wed 15 Sep 2004 : 7.00-8.30pm : Albert Park Conference Centre, South Melbourne

Separation Creek

The Township Vision

- No comment
- Key Existing Characteristics
- Dot point Four: Setbacks are large and variable at the front (8-15 metres) and sometimes moderate to large at either side
- No commercial activity
- Other descriptions are okay
- The Updated Preferred Character Statement
- "... in established gardens and amongst native [and exotic] canopy trees in the vegetated hillfaces..."
- "Preferred character will be achieved by..." – All points are satisfactory but add:
- Restriction of commercial activity
- Enhancement of the creek and increasing its accessibility
- Design Guidelines for each Precinct
- All satisfactory except:
- Streetscape: Design Response – locate garages, carports etc behind the line of the dwelling only where site conditions allow
- Vegetation – Avoid loss of existing (native) trees – substantial – a valuable community asset

Skenes Creek

The Township Vision

- Township boundaries need to remain as is to ensure no ribbon development occurs to the west, north and south of Skenes Creek
- Increased reference to ocean seaside / beach side location – sound and vision
- Clarify "green wedge" location – ambiguous, proximity to Old Coach and Skenes Creek Road?
- The Updated Preferred Character Statement
- Clarify smaller lots mean vegetation not subdivision
- Precinct 2 includes all Great Ocean Road properties – redrawn boundaries attached

Design Guidelines for each Precinct

- Houses should be protected from inappropriate developments that block sunlight for passive solar energy – roof/window light
- Building height – reduction arbitrary – not agreed
- Building site coverage / hard surface coverage – 20%-30% not adequate (Victorian guidelines state 60%)

Kennett River

Township Vision

- Re township vision as described should be protected
- Retain unsealed roads but make sure they are maintained

- Inspection and maintenance of the informal streetscape – local distribution of information about 'weeds' – eg. Agapanthas etc.
- Effective onsite management of waste water and storm water disposal

Design Guidelines for each Precinct

- Keep houses in proportion with block sizes but 20% site coverage is too arbitrary and restrictive
- Maintain eight metre limit (rather than proposed 7.5 metre limit)
- Maintain current sleepy atmosphere – no medium density or any further commercial development

COMMUNITY FORUM 4 – WYE RIVER

17th Sep 2004: 7.00-8.30pm: Wye River Surf Lifesaving Club, Wye River

Kennett River

- Redrawing of precincts is not correct – retain former section "1" in new section "2"
- We question the suggestion concerning the value / wisdom of underground power
- Effluent requirements must be enforced and met. Highest priority must be to retain effluent on own block
- Percentage space must work together with the effluent / discharge requirements
- Of great concern are future buildings that will not be consistent with current neighbourhood characteristics (eg. Smallish, rural, rustic)
- Retain the sleepy hollow, hamlet style, village atmosphere and family friendly nature of township
- Curfew on cats is essential
- Question interpretation of height restrictions

Wye River

- Car parking
- Query on commercial development – where does it fit?
- Tree scapes and long-term 'view management'
- Vegetation: Provide applicants with a list of preferred species
- Any way of discouraging boring uniformity of buildings adjacent?
- Good to restrict site coverage (is the reference to tennis courts realistic?)
- Review precinct boundaries – top of Morley Avenue more like Wye 1?
- Good to restrict height but accept need for flexibility / view of slope
- Strengthen vision to reinforce
 - protection of ridgelines
 - spacing of buildings

SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS

Draft Precinct Brochures

Name	Comments	Response
Betty Hull Separation Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appreciate progress made in the study. Agree with points raised on Friday 17th September and in the literature presented. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Agree.
Rita Burns Apollo Bay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No extension of the Residential Zone beyond the current boundaries in Skenes Creek. Any future development in Skenes Creek be consistent with the guidelines proposed for Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek, not for Apollo Bay. Skenes Creek residents have voted at least twice not to have mail deliveries in the last 3 years. Further subdivisions in Skenes Creek like the C-Air development on the Great Ocean Rd would ruin the character and feel of the place. Skenes Creek is and must remain a habitat for birdlife and native animals. Developments in Skenes Creek must be kept to a minimal and remain rural. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Noted, however outside the scope of this study. <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted, however outside the scope of this study <input type="checkbox"/> Noted, however outside the scope of this study <input type="checkbox"/> Agree Agree
Murray Champion Skenes Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distinction between Coastal Bush and Coastal Garden, somewhere between forum 1 and forum 2 went out the window. This distinction is important. Boundary line between the Skenes Creek 1 and Skenes Creek 2 was more accurately placed on earlier version of the Precinct Issue papers. A need to reduce the area included in the Old Coach Road green wedge, as after additional residents are completed there will be no remnant vegetation left standing. Therefore this whole development site (C-Air development) should be included in an expanded Coastal Garden Precinct. Majority of Skenes Creek people do not want any expansion of the village beyond the present boundaries. Therefore there should be no rezoning of the Rural land surrounding the village. Any development guidelines proposed for Skenes Creek to be consistent with the guidelines proposed for Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek, and definitely not those proposed for Apollo Bay. The people of Skenes Creek highly value their natural environment and are totally opposed to any development posing visual or physical threat. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted, however outside the scope of this study Noted. Noted, however outside the scope of this study Noted, however outside the scope of this study Agree
Juliet Le Feuvre WRSCPA Wye River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully supportive of the aims and content of the study, particularly in relation to sharing views, maintenance of native vegetation and restricting the proportion of the block that can be built on. Specific problems in Wye River and Separation Creek relating to the steepness of the slopes and the risk of landslips. Storm water and waste management are vital elements in reducing landslide risk, and the necessity to spread load and minimise the depth of cuts has effects on the built form and height of buildings. Proposed Neighbourhood character overlay needs to be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree. Noted, however outside the scope of this study

Name	Comments	Response
	<p>workable in conjunction with the existing landslip and bushfire management overlays.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Idea of locating Car parking behind the line of the dwellings may not be practical and could lead to excessive construction of driveways and subsequent drainage problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted.
Roger Brink Skenes Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing character of Skenes Creek can only be maintained if there is no extension of the residential zone beyond the current boundaries. Any such extension would constitute strip development and would irrevocably degrade the environmental and associated tourism values of the Great Ocean Road. Green Wedge Precinct will be strengthened by retaining the existing unsealed roads which complement the native vegetation and informal streetscapes. Community values listed in the proposed precinct brochure suggest that multi-unit developments would be considered inappropriate, however I would be more comfortable if this was explicitly stated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted, however outside the scope of this study <p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted.
Joan Brick Skenes Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project will benefit not only everyone living in these four towns but also the whole region. People in these areas would like to maintain the balance between development and preserving the natural features of the area. Brochure reflects the feedback that was given at the forums held. The draft document is very user friendly. <p><input type="checkbox"/> As a result of this document we feel reassured in our plans of building and settling in the Skenes Creek area in the future.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree. <p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree.</p>
Jennifer H Poliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impressed by details of Skenes Creek 2 and strongly support the design guidelines. No extension of the residential zone beyond the present boundaries. Any future development in Skenes Creek be consistent with the guidelines proposed for Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek. Design Guidelines should apply to any recently approved (but not commenced) buildings. Doubt whether the proposed development of the block on the corner of Karlson Street and Skenes Creek Valley Road will maintain the informal, semi rural feel of this precinct. The proposal for a public toilet attached to the pumping station on the Skenes Creek beach should be reconsidered. This building will not blend in aesthetically with the environment. Further professional advice should be obtained to design a building more sympathetic to our coastline. A building that does not interrupt the natural vista of the Great Ocean Rd and does not protrude from the sand dunes, would be preferred. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree. Noted, however outside the scope of this study <p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Noted, however outside the scope of this study Noted.
David Henshall Wye River	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of investigations and reports over the years should be the starting point for the Neighbourhood Character Study. <p>--The final <u>Structure Plan</u> had very wide community acceptance. If anything Wye/Sep people have become greener and more fiercely protective of the low density, low rise, "protect and restore the natural environment" approach in the Plan.</p> <p>-The <u>Master Plan</u> grew out of the Structure plan. This reinforced the planting of</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree.</p>

Name	Comments	Response
	<p>indigenous trees and shrubs, and the removal of exotic species, that the Progress Association has been undertaking for about thirty years. The planting you see between the Foreshore Campsite and the Great Ocean Road, and along the foreshore in front of the store and the Hotel (on both sides of the road) is the result of that process.</p> <p>-The Harrington Park Committee, the Foreshore Committee and the Progress Association, are united in their view that native species, preferably indigenous, and not exotics, are the appropriate plants for all public areas of the Wye/Sep townships. To my knowledge every study and canvassing of opinion over very many years has emphasised the vital importance of maintaining and re-establishing the natural environment of the district, including the indigenous plants. There is also the very real danger of exotic and non indigenous plants, including Cyresses and garden plants, establishing themselves in the bush as they are already doing.</p> <p>-The "Three Towns Study" is a document impressive both in its approach and in the scientific rigour that has demonstrably gone into its production. It is an absolutely vital source of information about the area and how it can, and should be developed. The Progress Association (committee elected annually at a public meeting) continues to urge the Shire to implement its recommendations as speedily as possible.</p> <p>-The Waste Water Study is ongoing. The results of the forums provide important source material concerning community attitudes. Notably these attitudes include, quite vehemently, no reticulated water and no conventional sewerage system - ever. The reasons for these attitudes are, basically, protection of the environment and minimising the risk of landslip. There is, in any case, no source for reticulated water sufficient to provide for the present and future populations of Wye/Sep, even if storing creek water were feasible.</p> <p>-Town Planning Studies over the years, referred to in the Structure Plan, contain valuable material. The importance of containing the townships within the ridgelines, in so far as they do not already spill out, is emphasised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be reassuring to have answers to questions such as... - Need for compilation of the results of the NCS Questionnaires and the first round of Forums conducted by Planisphere. The document circulated is hard to understand, even by reference to the Summary of answers to the Questionnaire. Additionally many people will not have that Summary. How do we put the two together? Should we, for instance, assume that, if no comment was made, the group accepted the views expressed in the Summary? - The task of deciding whether the Summary of answers to the Questionnaire, on the 	<p>□ ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. • Agree. • Agree. • Noted.

Name	Comments	Response
	<p>one hand, or the Report of the Forums, on the other, represents a broader or more accurate sampling of community opinion. How do you weigh these views?</p> <p>. For instance, one dominant voice in a group can determine the outcome.</p> <p>- The accuracy of the Reports on Forums? Did the scribes for each group make an accurate and properly nuanced summary of what was said? Also, was the Consultant who produced the Report able to understand the written summaries, and was someone able accurately to transcribe what was said by the scribes at the meeting?</p> <p>- How do the Consultants deal with the issue of how many people actually espouse a particular position? How do they even know? How do they evaluate which are well informed and appropriate responses, and which derive from ignorance or prejudice? Does it matter?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community values the Cypresses and Norfolk pines. There is strong community support for indigenous planting. • In the report of Wye River Group 2 there is a startling error. At the top of page 3 it states "Maintain tanks and reticulated water (long term environmentally sound)." I can state with absolute certainty that no-one in the group, or anyone else publicly at the meeting in my hearing, advocated reticulated water. <input type="checkbox"/> The statement, top third of page one, that Separation Creek belongs to the community is inaccurate. True, most of it is on Crown Land. But that Crown ownership is interrupted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree. • Agree. • Noted.

Appendix 4 – Lot size and site coverage calculations

Separation Creek

Minimum = 600

Average = 800

0-600	601-800	801-1200	1201-1600	>1600
46	26	32	3	4

Note 3 lots over 1200 sq m are COS owned (1225, 2585 and 3988 sq m)

If these lots are excluded, then future subdivision potential is:

At 600 sq m, 4 lots could be subdivided into 10 lots

At 800 sq m, 2 lots could be subdivided into 5 lots

Wye River 1

Minimum = 800

Average = 900

0-800	801-900	901-1600	1601-1800	>1800
97	28	57	5	6

Note 1 lot over 1800 sq m is COS owned (3885sqm)

If this lot is excluded, then future subdivision potential is:

At 800 sq m, 10 lots could be subdivided into 21 lots

At 900 sq m, 5 lots could be subdivided into 10 lots

Wye River 2

Minimum = 800

Average = 1000

0-800	801-1000	1001-1600	1601-2000	>2000
75	39	54	8	4

At 800 sq m, 12 lots could be subdivided into 35 lots

At 1000 sq m, 4 lots could be subdivided into 17 lots

Kennett River 1

Minimum = 600

Average = 700

0-600	601-700	701-1200	1201-1400	>1400
31	29	22	0	1

Note the 1 lot over 1400 sq m is COS owned (3838sqm)

If this lot is excluded, then future subdivision
potential is:

At 600 sq m, 0 lots could be subdivided

At 700 sq m, 0 lots could be subdivided

Kennett River 2

Minimum = 900

Average = 1100

0-900	901-1100	1101-1800	1801-2200	>2200
31	31	29	1	4

At 900 sq m, 5 lots could be subdivided into 19 lots

At 1100 sq m, 4 lots could be subdivided into 13 lots

Skenes Creek 1

Minimum = 900

Average = 1300

0-900	901-1300	1301-1800	1801-2600	>2600
64	9	5	1	8

At 900 sq m, 9 lots could be subdivided into 57 lots

At 1300 sq m, 8 lots could be subdivided into 38 lots

Skenes Creek 2

Minimum = 600

Average = 700

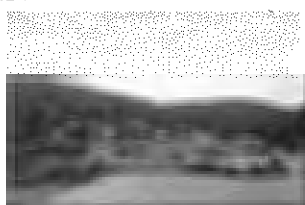
0-600	601-700	701-1200	1201-1400	>1400
86	72	61	0	5

At 600 sq m, 5 lots could be subdivided into 29 lots

At 700 sq m, 5 lots could be subdivided into 23 lots

Appendix 5 – Final Precinct Brochures

GENERAL BROCHURE



Kennett River

About the Study

The aim of the Neighbourhood Character Study is to ensure that residential development respects and enhances the future preferred character of the townships. The study describes the character, and contains design guidelines for each residential character precinct within the townships.

The Study describes the key characteristics and the preferred neighbourhood character of each part of the towns, developed with input from the community, using words and pictures. It goes on to translate these variations in character into design guidelines which are to be used by Council, applicants and the broader community in formulating and assessing development proposals.

The study defines 2 precincts for Kennett River. The precincts were defined on the basis of the styles of development, and the relationship of dwellings to the landscape and the preferred future character of the area. The precincts for Kennett River are shown on the map on the rear of this brochure.

This study builds on community values which were identified in the responses to the Community Questionnaires in October 2002, and in the Community Forums in July and September 2004.

Vision for Kennett River

The Kennett River township nestles into the vegetated ridges and hillslopes that form the Kennett River Valley. In the flatter areas of the town established native trees and vegetation around houses, the River, and wetlands provide natural links to the adjoining heavily vegetated hill faces. Bushy ridgelines surround the town and development in prominent locations and slopes is hidden from view.

How to Use the Precinct Brochures

A Precinct Brochure has been published for each precinct in the Study Area. A summary of the contents of the Precinct Brochures follows:

TOWNSHIP VISION Establishes a vision for the future character of the entire township.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION Summarises the elements of the Precinct that make it different or distinctive.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS Lists key elements of the existing neighbourhood character, covering aspects such as vegetation density and type, era and style of development, setbacks, front fence style and public domain treatments such as street trees.

COMMUNITY VALUES Summarises which aspects of the precinct's character are valued by the community.

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT Establishes a future direction for development in the precinct, and then lists the key components of that direction.

Design Guidelines

On the rear of each brochure is a table of Design Guidelines that provides a basis for Council to consider development applications and to encourage residents and landowners to improve and maintain the valued characteristics of the townships. The columns of the table are explained as follows:

Character Element Lists aspects of the neighbourhood character including: Town Setting and Views, Buildings and Structures, Streetscape, and Vegetation.

Objectives States the intentions and desired outcomes for that character element.

Design Responses Are the preferred method to satisfy the relevant character element objective(s). Other methods of achieving the relevant objective may be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction.

Avoid Statements that specify inappropriate design responses.

Kennett River



DESIGN GUIDELINES

Kennett River 1

Character Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
Town Setting and views	To provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast and surrounding hills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings and structures should be sited and designed to take into account existing views to the coast and surrounding hills from nearby properties. 	<i>Buildings that obscure existing views to the coast or hills from nearby properties.</i>
	To maintain vegetation dominated views of the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On visible hill faces, plant additional vegetation to screen buildings and structures and ensure that development continues to be screened from views from key viewing locations including the coast and Great Ocean Road. 	<i>Buildings and structures which substantially interrupt the continuous tree canopy.</i>
Buildings and Structures	To ensure that new development is set beneath the remnant canopy tree cover and within the sloping topography.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep development below the established or future mature tree canopy height and limit heights to a maximum of 8m above natural ground level (other than architectural details) and no more than two storeys above natural ground level. On sloping land, minimise the visual impact of buildings and reduce the need for cut and fill by designing buildings to follow the contours and step down the slope. Minimise building footprints. Site buildings and structures away from prominent ridgelines. 	<i>Buildings that protrude above the mature tree canopy or dominate the landscape setting.</i> <i>Buildings that do not follow the natural contours of the site, and require excessive cut and fill.</i> <i>Large building masses that break the continuous tree canopy.</i> <i>Buildings or structures in highly visible locations.</i>
	To encourage a variety of innovative dwelling styles, and materials that relate to the coastal bushland qualities of the precinct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the form of buildings and elevations, particularly front facades, and include elements that lighten the building form such as balconies, glazing, and light transparent balustrading. Use simple building details. Use a mix of contemporary and traditional coastal materials, textures and finishes including timber, render, non-masonry sheeting, glazing, stone and brick. 	<i>Bright colours that contrast strongly with the vegetation</i> <i>Sheer, visually dominant elevations.</i> <i>Excessive decoration and historical reproduction styles.</i> <i>Overuse of heavy looking materials such as brick.</i>
	To encourage materials and colours that minimise the distant visibility of development and contrast with vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise colours and finishes that compliment the native vegetation of the local area, including dark colours, natural finishes, and matte finishes. Use glazing and roofing materials of low reflectivity. 	<i>Bright colours and finishes that contrast with the surrounding vegetation.</i> <i>Highly reflective glazing and roofing materials.</i>
	To ensure that adequate space is available on private land for the retention and planting of substantial vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total building site coverage should not exceed 20%. The total hard surface site coverage (including buildings, tennis courts, structures and impervious surfaces) should not exceed 30% and the remaining land should be used for pervious surfaces able to support vegetation. Set dwellings back from both side boundaries to allow sufficient space to plant large canopy trees. 	<i>Large building footprints with no space for vegetation.</i> <i>Large areas of hard surfaces.</i> <i>Lack of vegetation between buildings.</i>
	To ensure that newly created lots are of a sufficient size to achieve the preferred character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum lot size for all new lots is 600 sq.m. Where 4 or more lots are created by one subdivision, the average lot size is 700 sq.m. In calculating the lot size of a battle-axe style subdivision, the area of the driveway must not be included. 	<i>Lots that are smaller than the minimum.</i>
Streetscape	To ensure that front setbacks and streetscapes are not dominated by car parking areas and driveways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driveways should follow the contours of the site to minimise gradients and the need for retaining walls. Use earth toned materials for the driveway and permeable surfaces where the gradient permits. 	<i>Steep driveways with excavated parking areas.</i> <i>Brightly coloured driveway materials that are highly visible</i>
	To retain the informal and bushy qualities of the frontage treatments and streetscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the area between the building and the front property boundary is mostly permeable and able to support vegetation, including canopy trees. Provide no front fencing, or planting instead of a front fence. Where side and rear fencing is required, use post and wire type fencing. 	<i>Lack of vegetation within front setbacks.</i> <i>Fences at the front boundary.</i> <i>Solid side and rear fencing.</i>
Vegetation	To strengthen the native bush vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing trees and understorey wherever possible and provide for the planting of new indigenous vegetation, including canopy trees, wherever possible. Require all applications for new dwellings to prepare a landscape plan that includes the planting of appropriate indigenous trees and other vegetation around the dwelling. Encourage the removal of environmental weeds and other exotic vegetation where stability will not be compromised by doing so. 	<i>Loss of existing trees.</i> <i>Planting of environmental weeds.</i>

The fire risk of each property should be assessed and these Design Guidelines applied appropriately

PRECINCT BROCHURE

Kennett River 1



TOWNSHIP VISION

The Kennett River township nestles into the vegetated ridges and hillslopes that form the Kennett River Valley. In the flatter areas of the town established native trees and vegetation around houses, the River, and wetlands provide natural links to the adjoining heavily vegetated hill faces. Bushy ridgelines surround the town and development in prominent locations and slopes is hidden from view.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct includes a small residential area settled on a ridge north of the Kennett River. Houses of varied contemporary styles are developed within the remnant native forest and are frequently elevated because of the sloping land. Native bush extends across frontages to the public domain where streetscapes are largely informal and roads are unsealed. Although much of the area is enclosed by wet native forest, some lots within the precinct afford views to the coast.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture is predominantly 1960s to present 'rustic' coastal style (pole or elevated column construction) with some basic 1950s-1970s 'modern' seaside shacks.
- Materials are weatherboard, natural vertical or horizontal timber cladding with some fibro or 'hardiplank' rustic style. Occasional corrugated iron cladding in newer dwellings.
- Dwellings are frequently single storey, but elevated on poles.
- Lot sizes range from 500 to 1000m² with four lots over 1000m² and an average lot size of around 700m².
- Site coverage is generally in the range of 15-25%.
- Setbacks are variable, but mostly large with houses set in substantial vegetated grounds, although some dwellings are relatively close to the road (3-4m).
- Gardens are dominated by continuous remnant native bush throughout this precinct.
- Frontages are open with no front fences and dwellings are often screened by native vegetation, including canopy trees.
- Roads are unsealed with gravel swale drains, and informal native bush streetscapes that are largely indistinguishable from private frontages.
- Topography is steep and hilly throughout. Views from most dwellings are contained by bush, although some views to the coast are available.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Kennett River Precinct 1 values:

- Natural bush surrounds.
- Houses which blend with natural background.
- Spaces between dwellings.
- Varying styles.
- Sea views where available.
- Houses screened or set back from roads.
- No or minimal fencing.
- Well maintained houses.

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

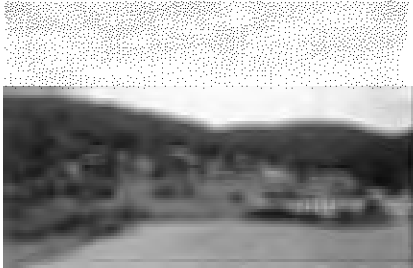
This precinct will be dominated by continuous native bush, with dwellings set below and amongst remnant canopy trees. Frontages will be open and consist of diverse native understorey that screens views of buildings from roads. The low scale dwellings will avoid prominent locations and ridgelines, and will be sited to provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast where available. Vegetation will be retained or replaced with any new developments to screen buildings when viewed from the Great Ocean Road. Innovative house styles will be encouraged of a scale, materials and colours that blend with the bush character and follow the topography. The informal bush character of the precinct will be assisted by the streetscape planting and lack of formal kerbing.

The preferred character will be achieved by:

- Ensuring indigenous and appropriate native vegetation is retained and planted
- Ensuring adequate space around dwellings to retain and sustain substantial vegetation
- Ensuring new dwellings are designed to fit within the landscape and site contours
- Encouraging innovative housing styles and materials that blend with the landscape
- Encouraging the informal streetscape appearance on public and private land.
- Encouraging an absence of fencing.

PRECINCT BROCHURE

Kennett River 2



TOWNSHIP VISION

The Kennett River township nestles into the vegetated ridges and hillslopes that form the Kennett River Valley. In the flatter areas of the town established native trees and vegetation around houses, the River, and wetlands provide natural links to the adjoining heavily vegetated hill faces. Bushy ridgelines surround the town and development in prominent locations and slopes is hidden from view.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct encompasses some recent dwellings south of the river on previously cleared, flatter land in the middle of the township, and a number of dwellings of mixed styles on the hill faces in the south of the River valley. In the valley, houses are set large distances apart and low, mixed gardens with occasional canopy trees and the wetlands provide a natural character and sense of openness. The hillsides are bushy, and dwellings are set amongst a dense cover of canopy trees. In newly developed areas gardens are informal and grassy, or establishing. Some views, both to the vegetated hillsides and coast, are available.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture is a mix of 1950s to 1970s low-lying 'modern' seaside style and contemporary, large and variable seaside style, often colourful, with large windows and verandahs. More recent contemporary dwellings are located in the recently subdivided areas.
- Materials are a mix of rendered brick, flush fibro, corrugated colourbond, painted weatherboard or 'hardiplank'.
- Height: dwellings are mostly two storeys throughout the flatter areas, and two storey, or three storey equivalent on the sloping edges of the precinct.
- Lot sizes range from 500m² to 6000m² with many lots over 1000 m² and an average lot size of approximately 1100m².
- Site coverage is generally in the range of 15-25%.
- Setbacks at both front and side are highly variable, with dwellings appearing 'loosely scattered' throughout the precinct while dwellings in Hazel Court have consistent front setbacks of 3-4m.
- Gardens in the flatter areas have some eucalypt canopy trees, with lawn and low-level exotic and native plants as understorey. In the hillier parts to the south of the precinct, gardens are bushier with more canopy trees and dense understorey.
- Frontages are open with no front or side fences throughout.
- Roads are either sealed, with some upstanding kerbs, or unsealed with no kerbs. Streetscapes are informal, with some planted eucalypts in the flatter areas and bushy vegetation in the hillier parts.
- Topography is flatter around Kennett River, but becomes steep at the edges of the precinct affording views to vegetated hillsides and the coast.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Kennett River Precinct 2 values:

- Small, modest 'holiday style' beach houses.
- Modern, but not obtrusive dwellings.
- Coastal views and surrounds.
- Colours that blend with the natural environment
- Space around dwellings.
- Well maintained houses.

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct will consist of coastal style dwellings set amongst gardens of native species. A spacious garden character will be maintained by setting buildings apart and encouraging landscaping between dwellings. Dwellings will be carefully designed, sited and landscaped to be unobtrusive when viewed from roads and to provide for a sharing of views to the coast where available. Trees in both public and private domains will provide a sense of continuity through the precinct and visually link with the adjacent bushland areas.

The preferred character will be achieved by:

- Ensuring buildings are sited to accommodate spacious coastal gardens
- Encouraging dwelling design that reflects the coastal setting and does not dominate long distance views of the settlement from the public viewing locations
- Ensure that sufficient space is available around buildings for the gardens and trees
- Encouraging revegetation with indigenous or appropriate native tree species
- Encouraging a lack of front fencing

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Kennett River 2

Character Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
Town Setting and Views	To provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast and surrounding hills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings should be sited and designed to take into account existing views to the coast and hills from nearby properties. 	<i>Buildings that obscure existing views to the coast or hills from nearby properties.</i>
	To minimise visual impact of development from key public viewing locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing trees and encourage the planting of new trees to screen buildings and structures that are visible from key public viewing locations. 	<i>Highly exposed buildings or structure, visible from the beach and the Great Ocean Road,</i>
Buildings and Structures	To ensure that new development sits within the landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings should not exceed 8m above natural ground level (other than architectural details) and no more than two storeys above natural ground level. On sloping land, minimise the visual impact of buildings and reduce the need for cut and fill by designing buildings to follow the contours and step down the slope. Minimise building footprints. Site buildings away from prominent ridgelines. 	<i>Buildings that dominate the landscape setting.</i> <i>Buildings that do not follow the natural contours of the site, and require excessive cut and fill.</i>
	To encourage a variety of dwelling styles that respect the coastal and bushland qualities of the precinct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the form of buildings and elevations, particularly front facades, and include elements that lighten the building form such as balconies, glazing, and light transparent balustrading. Use simple building details. Use a mix of contemporary and traditional coastal materials, textures and finishes including timber, render, non-masonry sheeting, glazing, stone, brick, and iron roofing. In bushy areas utilise colours and finishes that complement the native vegetation of the local area, including dark, natural colours and matte finishes. Use glazing and roofing materials of low reflectivity. 	<i>Sheer, visually dominant elevations.</i> <i>Excessive decoration and historical reproduction styles.</i> <i>Overuse of heavy looking materials such as brick.</i> <i>Highly reflective building materials.</i> <i>Buildings in highly visible locations.</i>
	To ensure that adequate space is available on private land for the retention and planting of vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total building site coverage not exceed 20%. The total hard surface site coverage (including buildings, tennis courts, structures and impervious surfaces) should not exceed 30% and the remaining land should be used for pervious surfaces able to support vegetation. Set dwellings back from both side boundaries to allow sufficient space for substantial vegetation. 	<i>Large building footprints with no space for vegetation.</i> <i>Large areas of hard surfaces.</i> <i>Lack of vegetation between buildings.</i>
	To ensure that newly created lots are of a sufficient size to achieve the preferred character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum lot size for all new lots is 900 sq.m. Where 4 or more lots are created by one subdivision, the average lot size is 1100 sq.m. In calculating the lot size of a battle-axe style subdivision, the area of the driveway must not be included. 	<i>Lots that are smaller than the minimum.</i>
Streetscape	To ensure that front setbacks and streetscapes are not dominated by car parking structures and driveways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Locate garages, carport and car parking areas behind the line of the dwelling. Driveways should follow the contours of the site to minimise gradients and the need for retaining walls. Use earth toned materials for the driveway and pervious surfaces where the gradient permits. 	<i>Car parks or car parking structures that dominate the front setback or view of the dwelling.</i> <i>Steep driveways with excavated parking areas.</i> <i>Brightly coloured driveways that are highly visible</i>
	To retain the informal, coastal qualities of the streetscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the area between the building and the front property boundary is mostly permeable and able to support substantial vegetation. Provide no front fence, or planting instead of fence. Where side and rear fencing is required, use post and wire type fencing. 	<i>Lack of vegetation within front setbacks.</i> <i>Fences at the front boundary.</i> <i>Solid side and rear fencing.</i>
Vegetation	To strengthen vegetation links between private land, the adjacent bushland areas and the river environs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing trees wherever possible and provide for the planting of new native or indigenous vegetation, including canopy trees, wherever possible. Dwellings should be sited to incorporate space for the retention and planting of substantial vegetation. Require all applications for new dwellings to prepare a landscape plan that includes the planting of appropriate indigenous trees and other vegetation around the dwelling. Encourage removal of environmental weeds. Develop bush linkages to Kennett River and between private blocks and the river. 	<i>Loss of existing trees.</i> <i>Dwellings that do not provide sufficient space to accommodate trees.</i> <i>Exclusive use of exotic species.</i>

The fire risk of each property should be assessed and these Design Guidelines applied appropriately

GENERAL BROCHURE

Skenes Creek



About the Study

The aim of the Neighbourhood Character Study is to ensure that residential development respects and enhances the future preferred character of the townships. The study describes the character, and contains design guidelines for each residential character precinct within the townships.

The Study describes the key characteristics and the preferred neighbourhood character of each part of the towns, developed with input from the community, using words and pictures. It goes on to translate these variations in character into design guidelines which are to be used by Council, applicants and the broader community in formulating and assessing development proposals.

The study defines 2 precincts for Skenes Creek. The precincts were defined on the basis of the styles of development, the relationship of dwellings to the landscape and the preferred future character of the area. The precincts for Skenes Creek are shown on the map on the rear of this brochure.

This study builds on community values which were identified in the responses to the Community Questionnaires in October 2002, and in the Community Forums in July and September 2004.

Vision for Skenes Creek

Skenes Creek is a coastal hamlet set on rolling topography at the base of the Otway Ranges. There is a sense of openness to the town created by the spacious siting of buildings and expansive views to the coast and hillsides. A green wedge corridor through the centre of the township links the town with a vegetated hillside backdrop and is enhanced by regeneration of indigenous and appropriate coastal shrubs around dwellings and public areas.

How to use the precinct brochures

A Precinct Brochure has been published for each precinct in the Study Area. A summary of the contents of the Precinct Brochures follows:

TOWNSHIP VISION Establishes a vision for the future character of the entire township.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION Summarises the elements of the Precinct that make it different or distinctive.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS Lists key elements of the existing neighbourhood character, covering aspects such as vegetation density and type, era and style of development, setbacks, front fence style and public domain treatments such as street trees.

COMMUNITY VALUES Summarises which aspects of the precinct's character are valued by the community.

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT Establishes a future direction for development in the precinct, and then lists the key components of that direction.

Design Guidelines

On the rear of each brochure is a table of Design Guidelines that provides a basis for Council to consider development applications and to encourage residents and landowners to improve and maintain the valued characteristics of the townships. The columns of the table are explained as follows:

Character Element Lists aspects of the neighbourhood character including: Town Setting and Views, Buildings and Structures, Streetscape, and Vegetation.

Objectives States the intentions and desired outcomes for that character element.

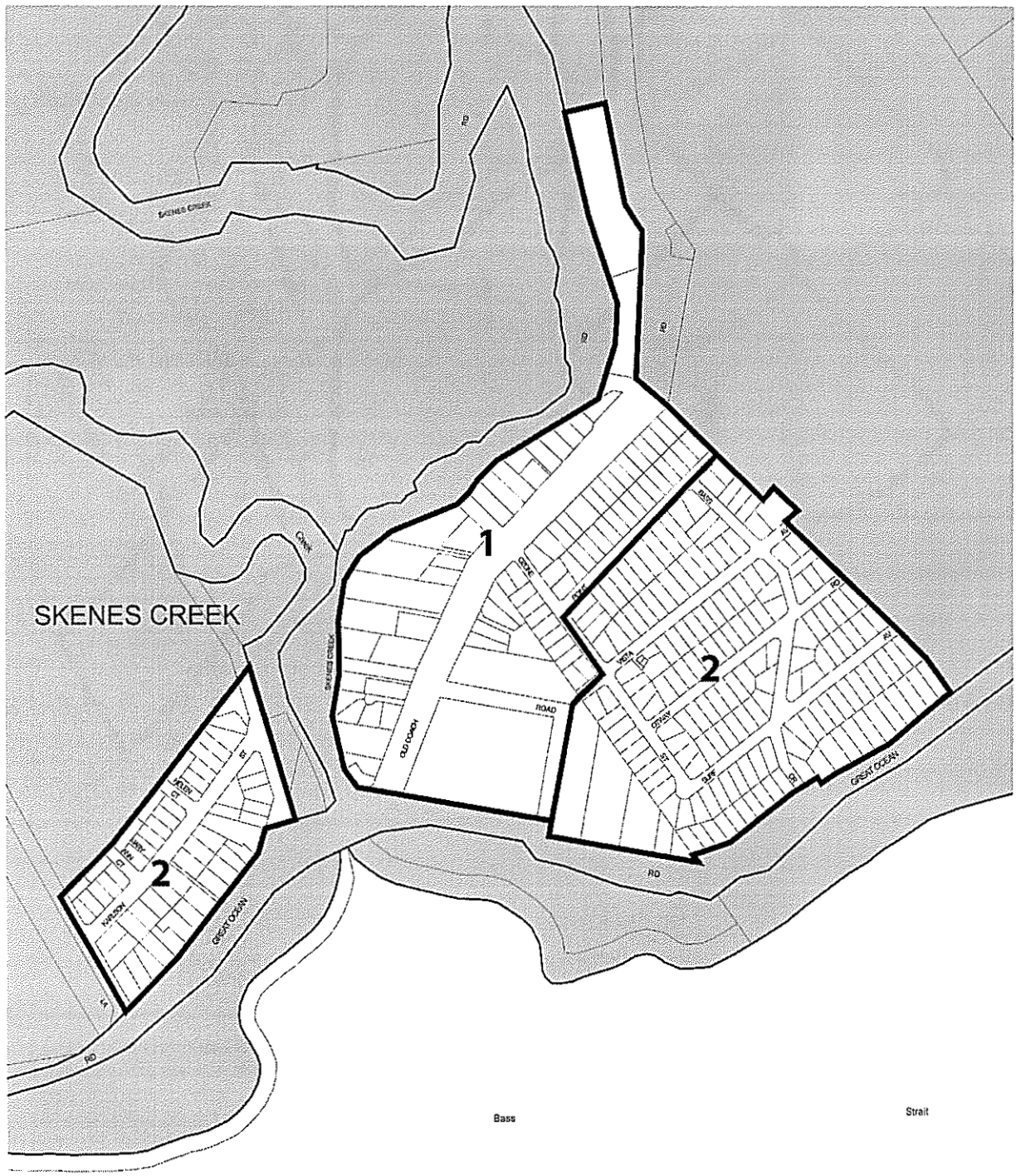
Design Responses Are the preferred method to satisfy the relevant character element objective(s). Other methods of achieving the relevant objective may be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction.

Avoid Statements that specify inappropriate design responses.



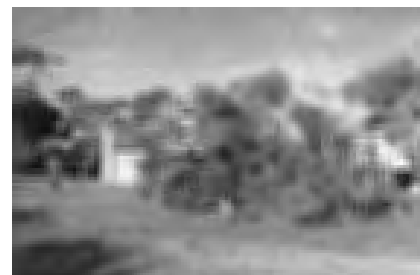
PRECINCT MAP

Skenes Creek



PRECINCT BROCHURE

Skenes Creek 1



TOWNSHIP VISION

Skenes Creek is a coastal hamlet set on rolling topography at the base of the Otway Ranges. There is a sense of openness to the town created by the spacious siting of buildings and expansive views to the coast and hillsides. A green wedge corridor through the centre of the township links the town with a vegetated hillside backdrop and is enhanced by regeneration of indigenous and appropriate coastal shrubs around dwellings and public areas..

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct includes the green wedge which runs along the Old Coach Road through the middle of Skenes Creek township, as well as broad area of coastal dwellings in the north. Lots tend to have a stronger relationship with the vegetated ranges than the coast, although views to the coast are available from some dwellings. Larger lots between Skenes Creek Road and the Old Coach Road which sustain continuous native bush, although this native bush corridor is weakest at the Great Ocean Road frontage where recent clearing has removed vegetation.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architectural style is consistently 1950s to 1970s 'modern' shack style dwellings, with some contemporary styles and renovated dwellings scattered throughout and 80-90s dwellings in the south of the precinct.
- Materials are weatherboard or fibro, except in the newer dwellings.
- Height is varied, although most dwellings are modest, one storey or two storey equivalent due to slope.
- Lot sizes range from 400m² to over 5000m² with many lots over 1000m² and many under 600 m². Average lot size is 1300 m².
- Site coverage is generally in the range of 15-25%.
- Setbacks are generous on the larger lots between Skenes Creek Road and the Old Coach Road where houses are set in vegetated grounds. On smaller lots, setbacks are average, providing sufficient space to sustain vegetation.
- Gardens are bushy native with numerous mature canopy trees and remnant understorey plants including coastal scrub. Planted bushy native gardens occur along Point Avenue and Ozone Street.
- Frontages are commonly open with some rural-style front fences and remnant native bush.
- Roads are commonly unsealed (except the lower sections of the Old Coach Road) with basic undeveloped streetscapes with no curbing or footpaths.
- Topography is rolling to steep, with views to the hills above the township, although often are contained by vegetation. A few lots in the south of the precinct offer open views to the coast.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Skenes Creek Precinct 1 values:

- Trees, bush and natural vegetation.
- Mix of houses and styles.
- Space around dwellings.
- Houses that blend with the environment.
- Seaside character.
- Lack of commercial development.
- Modest, older 'country style' houses.
- Large blocks with native bush.
- Unsealed roads.
- Houses that are well maintained.

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct provides a native 'green wedge' for the whole township, extending from the hillslopes behind the town to the Great Ocean Road. The character of the precinct will be strengthened by the planting and regeneration of indigenous and native vegetation. Dwellings will be set far enough apart to accommodate substantial native bush areas including canopy trees, and will be set substantially below the vegetation canopy. The semi-rural feel of the area will be retained by the lack of fencing and frequent unmade roads. Views to the dwellings will be softened by native vegetation in frontages to major roads and in the public domain along road verges.

The preferred character be achieved by:

- Ensuring indigenous and appropriate native species are retained and planted
- Ensuring new developments allow space for large trees
- Ensuring new dwellings are designed to fit within the landscape and site contours
- Encouraging innovative housing styles and materials that blend with the landscape
- Encouraging the informal streetscape appearance on public and private land
- Encouraging a lack of fencing or post and rail style fences.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Skenes Creek 1

Streetscape Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
Town setting and views	To provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast and the surrounding foothills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings and structures should be sited and designed to take into account existing views to the views to the coast and surrounding foothills from nearby properties. 	<i>Buildings and structures that obscure existing views to the coast or the foothills.</i>
	To maintain vegetation dominated views of the area and minimise the visual impact development from key viewing locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing trees and encourage the planting of new trees to screen dwellings and structures that are visible from the Great Ocean Road, the beach and other key viewing locations. 	<i>Buildings and structures that are highly exposed when viewed from key public viewing locations.</i>
Buildings and Structures	To ensure buildings and structures sit within the coastal bush landscape setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep development below the established or future mature tree canopy height and limit heights to a maximum of 8m above natural ground level (other than architectural details) and no more than 2 storeys above natural ground level. Minimise the visual impact of buildings and reduce the need for cut and fill by designing buildings to follow the contours and step down the site. Minimise building footprints. Where houses are set amongst vegetation, utilise colours and finishes that complement the native vegetation of the local area, including dark, natural colours and matte finishes. Use glazing and roofing materials of low reflectivity. 	<i>Buildings that dominate the landscape setting.</i> <i>Buildings that do not follow the natural contours of the site, and require excessive cut and fill.</i> <i>Large building masses that break the continuous tree canopy.</i> <i>Buildings or structures in highly visible locations.</i> <i>Colours that contrast strongly with the vegetation</i> <i>Highly reflective glazing and roofing materials.</i>
	To ensure buildings demonstrate a high standard of contemporary design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use simple building details. Articulate the form of buildings and elevations, particularly front facades, and include elements that lighten the building form such as balconies, glazing, and light transparent balustrading. Use a mix of contemporary and traditional coastal materials, textures and finishes including timber, render, non-masonry sheeting, glazing, stone, brick, and iron roofing. 	<i>Excessive decoration and historical reproduction styles.</i> <i>Unarticulated or non-textured, sheer facades and building forms.</i> <i>Overuse of heavy looking materials such as brick.</i>
	To ensure that adequate space is available on private land for the retention and planting of substantial vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total building site coverage should not exceed 20%. The total hard surface site coverage (including buildings, tennis courts, structures and impervious surfaces) should not exceed 30% and the remaining land should be used for pervious surfaces able to support vegetation. Set dwellings back from both side boundaries to allow for sufficient space to plant canopy trees. 	<i>Large building footprints with no space for vegetation.</i> <i>Large areas of hard surfaces.</i> <i>Lack of vegetation between buildings.</i>
	To ensure that newly created lots are of a sufficient size to achieve the preferred character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum lot size for all new lots is 900 sq.m. Where 4 or more lots are created by one subdivision, the average lot size is 1300 sq.m. In calculating the lot size of a battle-axe style subdivision, the area of the driveway must not be included. 	<i>Lots that are smaller than the minimum.</i>
Streetscape	To maintain the informal, semi-rural feel of streetscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the area between the building and the front property boundary is mostly permeable and able to support vegetation, including canopy trees. Provide no front fence, post and wire fencing, or planting instead of a front fence. Where side and rear fencing is required, use post and wire type fencing. Use indigenous species for planting in the public domain. 	<i>Lack of vegetation within the front setback.</i> <i>Solid fences on the front boundary.</i> <i>Solid side and rear fencing.</i>
Vegetation	To strengthen the wedge of vegetation linking the Great Ocean Road to the hill slopes behind the town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dwellings should be sited to incorporate space for the retention and planting of substantial vegetation, including canopy trees. Retain existing trees wherever possible and provide for the planting of new indigenous vegetation, including canopy trees, wherever possible. Require all applications for new dwellings to prepare a landscape plan that includes the planting of appropriate indigenous trees and other vegetation around the dwelling. Encourage the removal of environmental weeds and other exotic vegetation and their replacement with appropriate indigenous vegetation. 	<i>Loss of existing trees.</i> <i>Dwellings that do not provide sufficient space to accommodate trees.</i> <i>Planting of environmental weeds.</i>

The fire risk of each property should be assessed and these Design Guidelines applied appropriately

PRECINCT BROCHURE

Skenes Creek 2



TOWNSHIP VISION

Skenes Creek is a coastal hamlet set on rolling topography at the base of the Otway Ranges. There is a sense of openness to the town created by the spacious siting of buildings and expansive views to the coast and hillsides. A green wedge corridor through the centre of the township links the town with a vegetated hillside backdrop and is enhanced by regeneration of indigenous and appropriate coastal shrubs around dwellings and public areas.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct occurs in two discrete areas bordering the Great Ocean Road at either entry to the town, set on gently rolling topography. Houses are oriented with expansive views and frontage to the coast and consist of low, coastal and occasionally shrubby vegetation of both exotic and native species. Traditional 1950s to 1970s shack dwellings are being expanded and replaced with frequently two or more storey dwellings designed to take advantage of views. As a consequence, side setbacks are commonly small to average although front setbacks remain large.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architectural style consists of 1950s to 1970s 'modern' seaside style, many of which have been renovated or extended, with many contemporary coastal residences, especially along the Great Ocean Road edge.
- Materials vary throughout, with weatherboard and fibro cement common and vertical / 'hardiplank' timber or brick render in the newer dwellings.
- Height is mixed: many dwellings with views to the coast are two or more storey, although large pockets of more modest, single storey dwellings also occur.
- Lot sizes range from 400m² to over 1000m² with seven lots over 1000m² and many under 600m². Average lot size is around 730m².
- Site coverage is generally in the range of 20-30%.
- Setbacks are moderate to large at the front (variable between 4m and 10m), and small average at the sides.
- Gardens consist of low, established coastal vegetation with the mix of exotic and native variable between lots.
- Frontages are open or have low transparent front fences.
- Roads are largely mix of sealed and unsealed with some curbs and planted native streetscape trees.
- Topography is gently sloping toward the coast, offering expansive outviews throughout.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Skenes Creek Precinct 2 values:

- Mixed housing, variety of styles, blend of old and new.
- Bush / beach outlook and views.
- Low key holiday / seaside style housing.
- Houses set substantially back from roads
- Unsealed roads
- Space between dwellings.
- Absence of unit development and commercial activity.
- Houses that blend with the coastal character.
- Well maintained houses.

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct will continue to be characterised by diverse coastal dwellings set amongst established coastal gardens. The sense of openness will be maintained by setting the buildings apart, minimising intrusive front fencing, and encouraging building forms that respect views to the surrounding hills and coast. The precinct will be united by consistent mature plantings of native and exotic coastal species in the public and private domains.

This preferred character will be achieved by:

- Ensuring new development incorporates appropriate coastal and indigenous vegetation
- Ensuring buildings are sited to accommodate a spacious coastal garden
- Ensuring buildings are low scale and fit within the landscape
- Encouraging the siting of building to have regard to a reasonable sharing of views
- Encouraging a lack of front fencing or provision of open style fencing

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Skenes Creek 2

Character Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
Town Setting and Views	To provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast and surrounding foothills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings and structures should be sited and designed to take into account existing views to the coast and surrounding foothills from nearby properties. 	<i>Buildings and structures that completely obscure existing views to the coast or foothills.</i>
Buildings and Structures	To ensure buildings are not visually dominant and demonstrate a high standard of contemporary design that reflects the coastal setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings should not exceed 8m above natural ground level (other than architectural details) and no more than two storeys above natural ground level. Articulate the form of buildings and elevations, particularly front facades, and include elements that lighten the building form such as balconies, glazing, and light transparent balustrading. Use simple building details. Use a mix of contemporary and traditional coastal materials, textures and finishes including timber, render, non-masonry sheeting, glazing, stone, brick, and iron roofing. 	<i>Buildings that dominate the landscape setting.</i> <i>Sheer, visually dominant elevations.</i> <i>Excessive decoration and historical reproduction styles.</i> <i>Unarticulated or non-textured, sheer facades and building forms.</i> <i>Overuse of heavy looking materials such as brick.</i>
	To ensure that buildings are located within spacious coastal garden settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total building site coverage should not exceed 25%. The total hard surface site coverage (including buildings, tennis courts, structures and impervious surfaces) should not exceed 35% and the remaining land should be used for pervious surfaces able to support vegetation. Set dwellings back from both side boundaries to allow sufficient space for substantial vegetation. The front setback should be no less than that of the adjoining dwellings. 	<i>Large building footprints with no space for vegetation.</i> <i>Large areas of hard surfaces.</i> <i>Lack of vegetation between buildings.</i> <i>Dwellings that extend too close to the front property boundary.</i>
Lot size	To ensure that newly created lots are of a sufficient size to achieve the preferred character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum lot size for all new lots is 600 sq.m. Where 4 or more lots are created by one subdivision, the average lot size is 700 sq.m. In calculating the lot size of a battle-axe style subdivision, the area of the driveway must not be included. 	<i>Lots that are smaller than the minimum.</i>
Streetscape	To retain the casual coastal setting of streetscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide no front fence where this predominates, or planting instead of a front fence. In other areas, provide an open style front fence to a maximum height of 1.2 metres. Minimise impermeable surfacing particularly in the front setback area and areas highly visible from the public domain. Locate garages, carport and car parking areas behind the line of the dwelling. 	<i>High or solid front fences.</i> <i>Large areas of impervious surfaces, particularly in the front setback area and areas visible from the public domain.</i> <i>Car parks or car parking structures that dominate the front setback or view of the dwelling.</i>
Vegetation	To strengthen the coastal garden settings of the dwellings and the existence of native coastal vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing trees and provide for the planting of new native coastal vegetation. Ensure buildings are sited to allow space for the planting of substantial vegetation. Require all applications for new dwellings to prepare a landscape plan that includes the planting of appropriate native coastal trees and other vegetation around the dwelling. 	<i>Loss of existing trees.</i> <i>Exclusive use of exotic species.</i> <i>Planting of environmental weeds.</i>

The fire risk of each property should be assessed and these Design Guidelines applied appropriately

GENERAL BROCHURE

Wye River / Separation Creek



About the Study

The aim of the Neighbourhood Character Study is to ensure that residential development respects and enhances the future preferred character of the townships. The study describes the character, and contains design guidelines for each residential character precinct within the townships.

The Study describes the key characteristics and the preferred neighbourhood character of each part of the towns, developed with input from the community, using words and pictures. It goes on to translate these variations in character into design guidelines which are to be used by Council, applicants and the broader community in formulating and assessing development proposals.

The study defines 3 precincts for Wye River and Separation Creek. The precincts were defined on the basis of the styles of development, and the relationship of dwellings to the landscape and the preferred future character of the area. The precincts for Wye River and Separation Creek are shown on the map on the rear of this brochure.

This study builds on community values which were identified in the responses to the Community Questionnaires in October 2002, and in the Community Forums in July and September 2004.

Vision for Wye River / Separation Creek

Wye River and Separation Creek together form a loosely defined residential settlement at the base of the Otway hills. The watercourses dividing the residential areas are key focal points and retain indigenous vegetation, which is reflected in private gardens and streetscapes. The forested hillsides and coast are important and visible features throughout the settlements. Housing on the steeper slopes is set into the landscape and is largely hidden from view from the Great Ocean Road.

How to Use the Precinct Brochures

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TOWNSHIP VISION Establishes a vision for the future character of the entire township.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION Summarises the elements of the Precinct that make it different or distinctive.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS Lists key elements of the existing neighbourhood character, covering aspects such as vegetation density and type, era and style of development, setbacks, front fence style and public domain treatments such as street trees.

COMMUNITY VALUES Summarises which aspects of the precinct's character are valued by the community.

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT Establishes a future direction for development in the precinct, and then lists the key components of that direction.

Design Guidelines

On the rear of each brochure is a table of Design Guidelines that provides a basis for Council to consider development applications and to encourage residents and landowners to improve and maintain the valued characteristics of the townships. The columns of the table are explained as follows:

Character Element Lists aspects of the neighbourhood character including: Town Setting and Views, Buildings and Structures, Streetscape, and Vegetation.

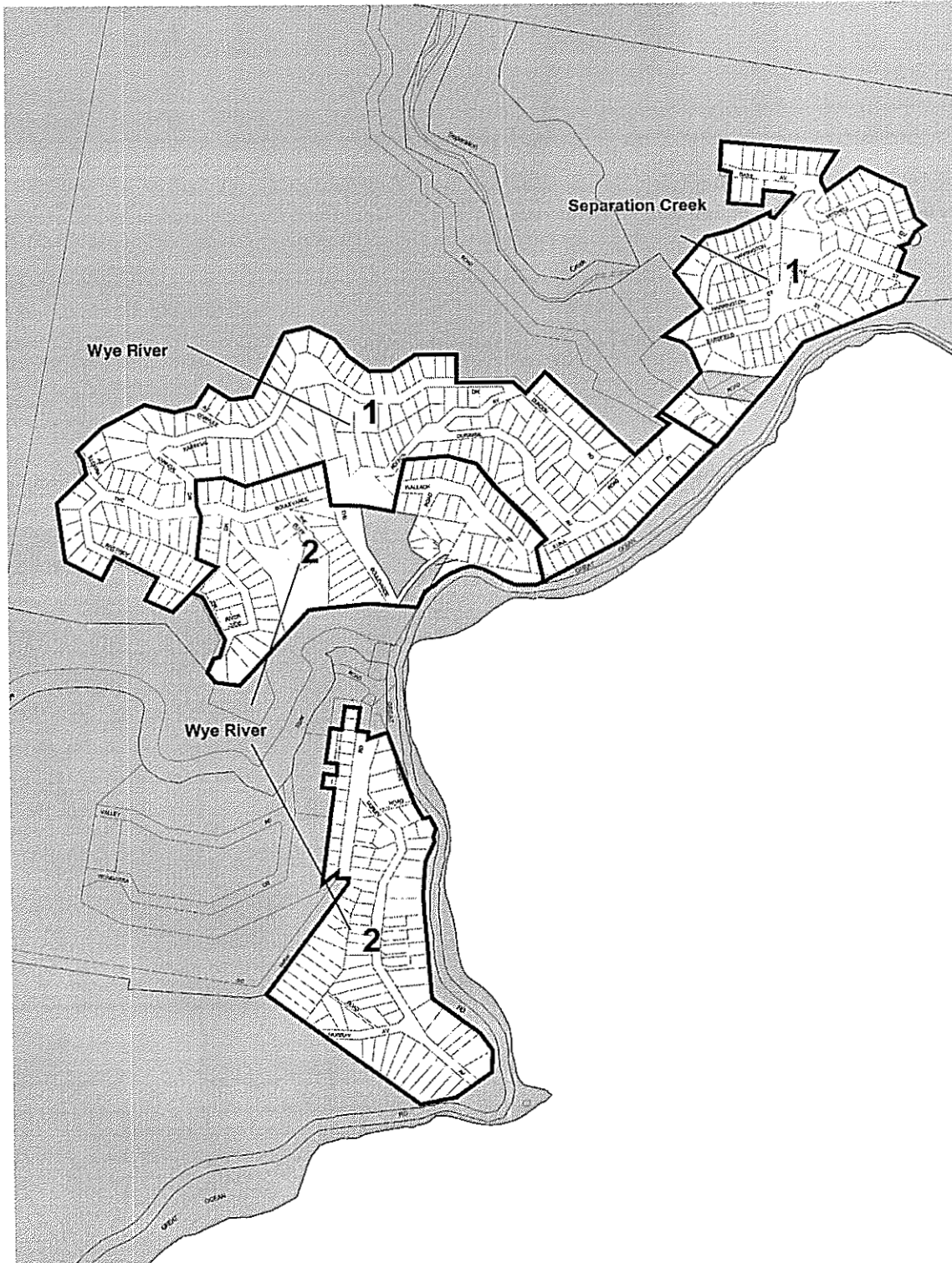
Objectives States the intentions and desired outcomes for that character element.

Design Responses Are the preferred method to satisfy the relevant character element objective(s). Other methods of achieving the relevant objective may be demonstrated to the Council's satisfaction.

Avoid Statements that specify inappropriate design responses.

PRECINCT MAP

Wye River / Separation Creek



PRECINCT BROCHURE

Wye River 1



TOWNSHIP VISION

Wye River and Separation Creek together form a loosely defined residential settlement at the base of the Otway hills. The watercourses dividing the residential areas are key focal points and retain indigenous vegetation, which is reflected in private gardens and streetscapes. The forested hillsides and coast are important and visible features throughout the settlements. Housing on the steeper slopes is set into the landscape and is largely hidden from view from the Great Ocean Road.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct consists of houses of mixed contemporary styles set on steep slopes amongst dense, wet native vegetation. The precinct is located in steep topography on the main ridgeline between Wye River and Separation Creek and buildings are well screened from views by native forest, including canopy trees. While dwelling styles are mixed across the precinct, the landscape setting, open frontages and bushy gardens contribute to a consistent character in which houses are dominated by native forest.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture is commonly 1970s to present 'rustic' coastal style, often pole or elevated column construction with low pitched roofs but occasional steep pitches or shaped roofs. Many dwellings have extensive deck and verandah areas.
- Materials are natural vertical or horizontal timber cladding with some fibro or 'hardiplank' rustic style and corrugated iron cladding.
- Building height is frequently two to three storey, or equivalent due to slope.
- Lot sizes range from 530m² to 4000m² including many lots over 1000 m² and an average lot size of 920 m².
- Site coverage is generally in the range of 20-25%.
- Setbacks are large but variable, 8-15 m at the front and generous at both sides.
- Gardens consist of remnant native bush with a native continuous canopy. None or very few exotic plants occur.
- Frontages are open and informal, with bush vegetation.
- Roads are commonly unsealed, although there are some sealed roads. Streetscapes are informal and bushy, with narrow verges and no curbs or footpaths.
- Topography is steep to very steep throughout. Many lots have outcrops to the ocean and surrounding ridgelines, although these are frequently filtered or blocked by vegetation.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Wye River Precinct 1 values:

- Bush gardens and tree canopy, habitat for wildlife
- Houses that are sympathetic to the environment and blend with surrounding bush and native vegetation.
- Large blocks.
- Space between buildings.
- New innovative designs and materials.
- Diversity of styles; mix of old and new.
- Well maintained houses.

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct will continue to be characterised by dominant native bush that forms a consistent canopy, linking to the adjacent bushland. Dwelling scale, bulk and siting will respond to the site and topography, allowing space and setbacks to maintain native bush, both as canopy and understorey. Buildings will be set beneath the canopy, and appropriately sited and designed so as to allow for the sharing of views to the coast where available, and to be hidden from view from the Great Ocean Road. The informality of the streetscapes will be retained by the lack of front fencing, frequent unmade roads and remnant vegetation.

This preferred character will be achieved by:

- Ensuring indigenous and appropriate native vegetation is retained and planted
- Ensuring adequate space around dwellings to retain and sustain substantial vegetation
- Ensuring new dwellings are designed to fit within the landscape and site contours
- Encouraging innovative housing styles and materials that blend with the landscape
- Encouraging the informal streetscape appearance on public and private land.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Wye River 1

Streetscape Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
Town Setting and Views	To provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings and structures should be sited and designed to take into account existing views to the coast from nearby properties. 	<i>Buildings or structures that obscure existing views to the coast.</i>
	To maintain vegetation dominated views of the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing trees and encourage the planting of new trees to screen dwellings and structures that are visible from key public viewing locations. On visible hill faces, plant additional vegetation to screen buildings and structures. 	<i>Highly visible buildings and structures from key public viewing locations.</i> <i>Buildings and structures which interrupt the continuous tree canopy.</i>
Buildings and Structures	To ensure that new development sits within the bushy hill faces and maintains the continuous vegetation canopy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep development below the established mature tree canopy height and limit heights to a maximum of 8m above natural ground level (other than architectural details) and no more than 2 storeys above natural ground level. Minimise the visual impact of buildings and reduce the need for cut and fill by designing buildings to follow the contours and step down the site. Minimise building footprints. Site buildings away from prominent ridgelines. 	<i>Buildings that dominate the landscape setting.</i> <i>Buildings that do not follow the natural contours of the site, and require excessive cut and fill.</i> <i>Large building masses that break the continuous tree canopy.</i> <i>Buildings in highly visible locations.</i> <i>Bright colours and finishes that contrast with the surrounding vegetation.</i> <i>Highly reflective glazing and roofing materials.</i>
	To encourage materials and colours that minimise the distant visibility of development and reduce contrast with vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise colours and finishes that compliment the native vegetation of the local area, including dark, natural colours and matte finishes. Use glazing and roofing materials of low reflectivity. 	<i>Bright colours and finishes that contrast with the surrounding vegetation.</i> <i>Highly reflective glazing and roofing materials.</i>
	To ensure buildings demonstrate a high standard of contemporary design that reflects the coastal setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use simple building details. Use a mix of contemporary and traditional coastal materials, textures and finishes including timber, render, non-masonry sheeting, glazing, stone and brick. Utilise colours and finishes that compliment the coastal setting, except where buildings are set amongst vegetation, as outlined above. Use glazing and roofing materials of low reflectivity. 	<i>Excessive decoration and historical reproduction styles.</i> <i>Unarticulated or non-textured, sheer facades and building forms.</i> <i>Colours that contrast strongly with the vegetation</i> <i>Highly reflective glazing and roofing materials.</i>
	To ensure that adequate space is available on private land for the retention and planting of substantial vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total building site coverage should not exceed 20%. The total hard surface site coverage (including buildings, tennis courts, structures and impervious surfaces) should not exceed 30% and the remaining land should be used for pervious surfaces able to support vegetation. Set dwellings back from both side boundaries to allow sufficient space to plant large canopy trees. 	<i>Large building footprints with no space for vegetation.</i> <i>Large areas of hard surfaces.</i> <i>Lack of vegetation between buildings.</i>
	To ensure that newly created lots are of a sufficient size to achieve the preferred character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum lot size for all new lots is 800 sq.m. Where 4 or more lots are created by one subdivision, the average lot size is 900 sq.m. In calculating the lot size of a battle-axe style subdivision, the area of the driveway must not be included. 	<i>Lots that are smaller than the minimum.</i>
Streetscape	To ensure that front setbacks and streetscapes are not dominated by car parking structures and driveways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Driveways should follow the contours of the site to minimise gradients and the need for retaining walls. Use earth tone materials for the driveway and permeable surfaces where the gradient permits. Ensure the area between the building and the front property boundary is mostly permeable and able to support vegetation. 	<i>Steep driveways with excavated parking areas.</i> <i>Brightly coloured driveways that are highly visible</i>
	To retain the informality of streetscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the area between the building and the front property boundary is mostly permeable and able to support vegetation, including canopy trees. Provide no front fence or planting instead of a front fence. Where side and rear fencing is required, use post and wire type fencing. 	<i>Lack of vegetation within front setbacks.</i> <i>Fencing at the front boundary.</i> <i>Solid side and rear fencing.</i>
Vegetation	To retain existing native vegetation and strengthen the links to adjacent bushland vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dwellings should be sited to incorporate space for the retention and planting of substantial vegetation, including canopy trees. Require all applications for new dwellings to prepare a landscape plan that includes the planting of appropriate indigenous trees and other vegetation around the dwelling. Encourage the removal of environmental weeds and other exotic vegetation where stability is not compromised by doing so. 	<i>Loss of existing trees.</i> <i>Dwellings that do not provide sufficient space to accommodate trees.</i> <i>Large areas of impervious surfaces, particularly in the front setback area.</i> <i>Planting of environmental weeds</i>

The fire risk of each property should be assessed and these Design Guidelines applied appropriately

PRECINCT BROCHURE

Wye River 2



TOWNSHIP VISION

Wye River and Separation Creek together form a loosely defined residential settlement at the base of the Otway hills. The watercourses dividing the residential areas are key focal points and retain indigenous vegetation, which is reflected in private gardens and streetscapes. The forested hillsides and coast are important and visible features throughout the settlements. Housing on the steeper slopes is set into the landscape and is largely hidden from view from the Great Ocean Road.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct lies on sloping topography to the south and immediately north of the River. Commanding views to the coast are available throughout. Dwellings are of mixed styles and occur mostly amongst wet native forest, although houses north of the River are set in more open garden settings with only occasional canopy trees. The consistency of the bush canopy south of the River is compromised by rooftops that are frequently visible through from the Great Ocean Road.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture is a mix of 1950s to 1970s 'modern' seaside style (many of which have been extended) and larger contemporary seaside styles, 1970s to present simple coastal style (with extensions), often pole or elevated column construction, often with large windows and verandahs.
- Materials are mixed weatherboard and fibro, except for a scattering of contemporary materials including steel or vertical timber cladding with some fibro or 'hardiplank' rustic style..
- Height is varied with some single-storey dwellings but predominantly two-storey (or equivalent due to slope).
- Lot sizes range from 280m² to over 2000m² including many lots over 1000 m² and an average lot size of 1028m².
- Site coverage is generally in the range of 15-25%.
- Setbacks are large and variable at the front (8-15m) and moderate to large at either side.
- Gardens are remnant native bush tending to bushy mixed in some parts.
- Frontages are frequently open, although a few low front fences occur.
- Roads are commonly sealed, with no kerbs or footpaths and low open, or exotic nature strips.
- Topography is rolling to steep, with open views to the coast and vegetated hills which surround the towns.
- Topography is steep throughout with expansive views to the coast (particularly Sturt Court and Morley Road). A vegetated ridgeline contains the precinct to the west.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Wye River Precinct 2 values:

- Variety of housing styles
- Unobtrusive buildings that are beneath the tree line.
- Simple, older style holiday houses.
- Generous spaces between buildings.
- Material colours that blend with the surroundings.
- Beach character.
- Well kept and tidy properties.
- Views and environmental features (bush and coast).

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct will achieve a more consistent native vegetation coverage to provide a unifying feature throughout. Space around dwellings will be sufficient to maintain trees and understorey, and minimises the appearance of building bulk and density. On hill slopes, buildings will relate to topography and be set amongst and beneath a dominant, native tree canopy. Buildings and structures in prominent locations when viewed from the Great Ocean Road will be designed to reduce their visual intrusion. Retention and planting of canopy trees in the public domain and around dwellings will be encouraged to establish a consistent tree canopy.

This will be achieved by:

- Minimising the visual impact of buildings and structures in prominent locations;
- ensuring that development sits below the native tree canopy and within the topography;
- encouraging a variety of dwelling styles that reflect the coastal bushland qualities of the area;
- retaining space between dwellings to allow for the planting of canopy trees;
- retaining the informal qualities of streetscapes;
- ensuring that front setbacks and streetscapes are not dominated by car parking structures and driveways; and
- strengthening the native tree canopy.

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Wye River 2

Character Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
Town Setting and Views	To provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast and surrounding bush.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings and structures should be sited and designed to take into account existing views to the coast and surrounding bush from nearby properties. 	<i>Buildings that obscure existing views to the coast or surrounding bush.</i>
	To minimise the visual impact of development from key viewing locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing trees and encourage the planting of new trees to screen dwellings and structures that are visible from the Great Ocean Road, the beach and other key viewing locations. On visible hill faces, plant additional vegetation to screen buildings and structures. 	<i>Buildings and structures that are highly exposed when viewed from key public viewing points.</i> <i>Buildings in highly visible locations</i>
Building and Structures	To ensure that new development sits below the established native tree canopy and within the steeply sloping topography.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep development below the established or future mature tree canopy height and limit heights to a maximum of 8m above natural ground level (other than architectural details) and no more than two storeys above natural ground level. On sloping land, minimise the visual impact of buildings and reduce the need for cut and fill by designing buildings to follow the contours and step down the slope. Minimise building footprints. Site buildings and structures away from prominent ridgelines. 	<i>Buildings that dominate the landscape setting.</i> <i>Buildings that do not follow the natural contours of the site, and require excessive cut and fill.</i> <i>Large masses of building.</i> <i>Buildings or structures in highly visible locations.</i>
	To encourage a variety of dwelling styles that reflect the coastal bushland qualities of the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the form of buildings and elevations, particularly front facades, and include elements that lighten the building form such as balconies, glazing, and light transparent balustrading. Use simple building details. Use a mix of contemporary and traditional coastal materials, textures and finishes including timber, render, non-masonry sheeting, glazing, stone and brick. In bushy and vegetated areas, utilise colours and finishes that reduce contrast and visibility and complement the native vegetation of the local area, including dark, natural colours and matte finishes. Use glazing and roofing materials of low reflectivity. 	<i>Sheer, visually dominant elevations.</i> <i>Excessive decoration and historical reproduction styles.</i> <i>Unarticulated or non-textured, sheer facades and building forms.</i>
	To ensure that adequate space is available on private land for the retention and planting of vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total building site coverage should not exceed 20%. The total hard surface site coverage (including buildings, tennis courts, structures and impervious surfaces) should not exceed 30% and the remaining land should be used for pervious surfaces able to support vegetation. Set dwellings back from both side boundaries to allow sufficient space for substantial vegetation. 	<i>Large building footprints with no space for vegetation.</i> <i>Large areas of hard surfaces.</i> <i>Lack of vegetation between buildings.</i>
Lot size	To ensure that newly created lots are of a sufficient size to achieve the preferred character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum lot size for all new lots is 800 sq.m. Where 4 or more lots are created by one subdivision, the average lot size is 1000 sq.m. In calculating the lot size of a battle-axe style subdivision, the area of the driveway must not be included. 	<i>Lots that are smaller than the minimum.</i>
Streetscape	To retain the informal qualities of streetscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide no front fence, or planting instead of a front fence. 	<i>Fences at the front boundary.</i>
	To ensure that front setbacks and streetscapes are not dominated by car parking structures and driveways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the area between the building and the front property boundary is mostly permeable and able to support vegetation. Locate garages, carport and car parking areas behind the line of the dwelling, where site conditions allow. 	<i>Lack of vegetation within front setbacks.</i> <i>Domination of frontages by crossovers, driveways and car parking areas or structures.</i>
Vegetation	To strengthen the dominant native tree canopy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dwellings should be sited to incorporate space for the retention and planting of canopy trees and understorey. Retain existing trees wherever possible and provide for the planting of new indigenous vegetation, including canopy trees, wherever possible. Require all applications for new dwellings to prepare a landscape plan that includes the planting of appropriate indigenous trees and other vegetation around the dwelling. 	<i>Dwellings that do not provide sufficient space to accommodate trees.</i> <i>Loss of existing trees.</i>

The fire risk of each property should be assessed and these Design Guidelines applied appropriately

PRECINCT BROCHURE

Separation Creek 1



TOWNSHIP VISION

Wye River and Separation Creek together form a loosely defined residential settlement at the base of the Otway hills. The watercourses dividing the residential areas are key focal points and retain indigenous vegetation, which is reflected in private gardens and streetscapes. The forested hillsides and coast are important and visible features throughout the settlements. Housing on the steeper slopes is set into the landscape and is largely hidden from view from the Great Ocean Road.

PRECINCT DESCRIPTION

This precinct covers the entire Separation Creek township and consists of dwellings of varying ages set beneath vegetated hillfaces around the creek. Houses are more visible in the lower areas where there is a sense of openness to the sea, while dwellings on the higher slopes sit within a dense cover of native canopy trees. Throughout the precinct, the surrounding bush provides a close, containing landscape feature.

KEY EXISTING CHARACTERISTICS

- Architecture is a mix of 1950s to 1970s 'modern' seaside style (many of which have been extended) and larger contemporary seaside styles, often with large windows and verandahs.
- Materials are mixed weatherboard and fibro, except for a scattering of contemporary materials including steel.
- Height is varied with large areas of single-storey dwellings, and predominantly two-storey (or equivalent due to slope) on hill slopes.
- Lot sizes range from 450m² to over 1000 m² with the average around 770m².
- Site coverage generally in the range of 18-30%.
- Setbacks are large and variable at the front (8-15m) and moderate to large at either side.
- Gardens are mixed exotic in some parts (especially associated with 'modern' seaside dwellings), bush gardens and remnant native bush on hill slopes. Cypress trees are a dominant feature of the town.
- Frontages are frequently open, although a few low front fences occur.
- Roads are commonly sealed, with no kerbs or footpaths and low open, or exotic nature strips.
- Topography is rolling to steep, with open views to the coast and vegetated hills which surround the towns.

COMMUNITY VALUES

The community of Separation Creek Precinct 1 values:

- Mixture of old and new dwellings.
- Adjacent bushland.
- Simple, older, beach style houses.
- Colours and materials which fit with bush / coastal setting.
- Space around buildings
- Interesting architecturally designed new houses.
- Lack of commercial development.
- Views to bush and seascape.
- Natural materials and innovative design.
- 'Holiday' atmosphere.
- Well maintained houses.

PREFERRED CHARACTER STATEMENT

This precinct will consist of a mix of low, coastal style dwellings and newer coastal styles, in established gardens and amongst native canopy trees in the vegetated hillfaces. Dwellings will be of materials and colours that reflect the coastal setting, and be designed and sited so as to minimise intrusion into views from roads, public spaces and adjacent dwellings and impact on the topography. Establishment of native and coastal trees in public and private gardens will unite the precinct and provide visual links to the surrounding bushland and creek environs.

The preferred character will be achieved by:

- Ensuring new developments allow space for large trees, and utilise indigenous or appropriate coastal species
- Encourage dwelling design that reflects the coastal setting and does not dominate long distance views of the settlement from the Great Ocean Road
- Ensure the siting of new dwellings to respect established views from public locations and allow for a reasonable sharing of views with adjoining properties

DESIGN GUIDELINES

Separation Creek 1

Character Element	Objective	Design Response	Avoid
Town Setting and Views	To provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings and structures should be sited and designed to take into account existing views to the coast from nearby properties. 	<i>Buildings that obscure existing views to the coast.</i>
	To minimise the visual impact of buildings and structures from key viewing locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing trees and encourage the planting of new trees to screen dwellings and structures that are visible from the Great Ocean Road, the beach and other key viewing locations. On highly visible hill faces, plant additional vegetation to screen buildings and structures. 	<i>Buildings and structures that are highly exposed when viewed from key public viewing points.</i> <i>Buildings and structures dominating views of the precinct.</i>
Buildings and Structures	To ensure that new development sits within the landscape and is not visually dominant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buildings should not exceed 8m above natural ground level (other than architectural details) and no more than two storeys above natural ground level. On sloping land, minimise the visual impact of buildings and reduce the need for cut and fill by designing buildings to follow the contours and step down the slope. Site buildings and structures away from prominent ridgelines. 	<i>Buildings that dominate the landscape setting.</i> <i>Buildings that do not follow the natural contours of the site, and require excessive cut and fill.</i> <i>Buildings in highly visible locations</i>
	To encourage building design, materials and colours that reflect the coastal and bushland setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulate the form of buildings and elevations, particularly front facades, and include elements that lighten the building form such as balconies, glazing, and light transparent balustrading. Use simple building details. Use a mix of contemporary and traditional coastal materials, textures and finishes including timber, render, non-masonry sheeting, glazing, stone and brick. Where houses are set amongst vegetation, utilise colours and finishes that compliment the native vegetation of the local area, including dark, natural colours and matte finishes. Use glazing and roofing materials of low reflectivity. 	<i>Sheer, visually dominant elevations.</i> <i>Excessive decoration and historical reproduction styles.</i> <i>Overuse of heavy looking materials such as brick.</i> <i>Bright colours and finishes that contrast with the surrounding vegetation.</i> <i>Highly reflective glazing and roofing materials.</i>
	To ensure that adequate space is available on private land for the retention and planting of vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total building site coverage should not exceed 25%. The total hard surface site coverage (including buildings, tennis courts, structures and impervious surfaces) should not exceed 35% and the remaining land should be used for pervious surfaces able to support vegetation. Set dwellings back from both side boundaries to allow sufficient space for substantial vegetation. 	<i>Large building footprints with no space for vegetation.</i> <i>Large areas of hard surfaces.</i> <i>Lack of vegetation between buildings.</i>
	To ensure that newly created lots are of a sufficient size to achieve the preferred character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum lot size for all new lots is 600 sq.m. Where 4 or more lots are created by one subdivision, the average lot size is 700 sq.m. In calculating the lot size of a battle-axe style subdivision, the area of the driveway must not be included. 	<i>Lots that are smaller than the minimum.</i>
Streetscape	To retain the casual, coastal streetscapes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide no front fence, or planting instead of a front fence. 	<i>Fencing at the front boundary.</i>
	To ensure that front setbacks and streetscapes are not dominated by car parking structures and driveways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the area between the building and the front property boundary is mostly permeable and able to support vegetation. Locate garages, carport and car parking areas behind the line of the dwelling. 	<i>Domination of frontages by crossovers, driveways, paving and car parking areas or structures.</i>
Vegetation	To strengthen vegetation links to the surrounding bushland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retain existing native trees wherever possible and provide for the planting of coastal and indigenous vegetation, including canopy trees. Dwellings should be sited to incorporate space for the retention and planting of substantial vegetation. Require all applications for new dwellings to prepare a landscape plan that includes the planting of appropriate indigenous trees and other vegetation around the dwelling. 	<i>Loss of existing native trees.</i> <i>Exclusive use of exotic species.</i> <i>Planting of environmental weeds.</i> <i>Dwellings that do not provide sufficient space to accommodate trees.</i>

The fire risk of each property should be assessed and these Design Guidelines applied appropriately

Appendix 6: Planning Scheme Documentation

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21.02 KEY INFLUENCES

The Shire has identified the following factors as the major planning and resource management influences in the Shire in the immediate future:

- Emphasis on the sustainability of development and protection for the environment in those areas which are fundamental to the identity of the Shire such as the volcanic craters, lakes and plains, the Otway Ranges and the Otway coast;
- Encourage excellence in the design of new development, including the layout of subdivisions and provide for the recognition and protection where necessary of the cultural heritage of the community;
- Promotion of Colac as the major business, shopping and service centre of the region;
- Diversification and expansion of employment opportunities by encouragement for the clustering of related industries and services and for the development of niche markets;
- Promotion of the provision of better infrastructure including natural gas, telecommunication facilities, high quality transport networks, housing and zoned industrial land;
- Encouragement for the development of a sustainable timber industry which features greater value adding and processing within Colac Otway Shire;
- Continuation of support for high value agricultural production with encouragement for the introduction of innovative techniques and crops;
- Promotion of the Shire as an important tourist destination and the encouragement of local businesses which build on the underlying resource base in an environmentally sensitive way to enrich the tourist experience;
- Commitment to improved education and training facilities, processes and structures that can increase local skills and knowledge;
- The need for an approach to planning and development that integrates Shire policies and actions with those of its partners and specifically those related to catchment management, coastal action and forest management; and
- The need to protect water catchments and in particular retain/improve quality of water supply and minimise the impact of salinity on agricultural land and introduce appropriate planning provisions where salinity has been identified.
- The need to protect the distinctive and highly valued landscape and coastal setting of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek townships.



21.04 OBJECTIVES - STRATEGIES – IMPLEMENTATION**21.04-01 Strategic location****Key objective**

To promote the strategic location of the Shire in relation to local, regional and international markets. (From 21.01-02)

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Improve the road, rail, air and port facilities so that Colac Otway has the best possible access to international and domestic markets.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Developing programs to promote the existing facilities in Colac Otway Shire.
- Developing strong links with the Department of State Development to ensure access to relevant state programs and policies for regional development.
- Developing strong links with other infrastructure providers to enhance the strategic location of the Shire.

21.04-02 The nature of the land**Natural Resources and Cultural Heritage Management****Key objective**

To manage the natural and cultural resources of the Shire in a sustainable manner to balance the needs of the future with protection for the key elements of the natural and cultural environment which are fundamental to the prosperity of the Shire. (From 21.01-03)

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote a co-operative regional approach to natural resource management.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Adopting an integrated catchment management approach to the assessment and development of the Shire's natural resources.
- Maintaining and enhancing close linkages with the Corangamite Catchment Management Authority, the Victorian Coastal Council and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment in relation to the Otway Forest Management Plan to ensure regional consistency is developed where appropriate.
- Implementing consideration of land capability in the assessment of use and development proposals.
- Encouraging land management practices and land use activities that have the capacity to be sustained and protect the environment.
- Promoting the integrated management of public and private land with particular attention to the interface between the two.
- Promoting the co-ordination of information exchange on natural resource information with relevant organisations.
- Completing and implementing a Shire-wide Conservation and Heritage Strategy for significant sites and buildings.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Manage the key elements of the natural environment in a sustainable manner.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Ensuring water quality standards are observed in the assessment of development proposals.
- Ensuring that the maintenance in natural condition of watercourses is considered in the assessment of use and development proposals.
- Promoting the establishment of reticulated sewerage systems in townships where practicable.
- Promoting the introduction of improved septic tank systems and alternative waste treatment systems in areas where sewerage systems are not available.

- Promoting land management practices that protect soil resources from landslip, contamination, compaction and other forms of degradation.
- Encouraging land management practices that seek to improve areas of soil degradation.
- Maintaining bio-diversity through the protection of significant habitats including remnant vegetation.
- Promoting a coordinated approach to effective pest plant and animal control throughout the Shire.
- Protecting native vegetation and other significant stands of vegetation in order to prevent land degradation, maintain water quality and protect the bio-diversity of flora and fauna species.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Minimise environmental hazards.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Promoting floodplain management policies, which minimise loss and damage, maintain the function of the floodway to convey and store floodwater and protect areas of environmental significance.
- Encouraging the use of "constructed wetlands" as a means of storing floodwater, improving water quality and adding to natural habitats.
- Including over areas subject to inundation a Land Subject to Inundation Overlay.
- Including over areas subject to landslip an Erosion Management Overlay.
- Using the findings of the Shire's Floodplain Management Project to manage floodprone areas, floodplains and wetlands.
- Requiring new subdivisions and changes of land use to demonstrate that appropriate design and siting measures are taken to avoid fire risk and protect human safety and property.
- Promoting, in association with the CFA, fire risk strategies that support management strategies that assist in the minimisation of risk.
- In association with the Country Fire Authority, Department of Natural Resources and Environment and the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer, identifying areas subject to fire hazard.
- Implementing the Council's Roadside Weeds Program.

The coast and its environs

Key objective

To protect those key visual, environmental and cultural features which give the Otway Coast its character whilst facilitating a range of developments in an environmentally sensitive way to provide greater residential choice and assist in diversifying the economic base of the Shire. (From 21.01-03)

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote a pattern of settlements in the coastal strip that recognises a balance between opportunity for growth and retention of environmental and cultural qualities.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Promotion development that demonstrates compatibility with the Victorian Coastal Strategy and the Shire's Coastal Towns Study.
- Identifying and protecting key environmental and cultural features.
- Promoting Apollo Bay as the key settlement on the coastal strip.
- Limiting expansion of other coastal settlements in accordance with environmental constraints.
- Discouraging development in the intervening land except where high quality design and minimal environmental impact can be demonstrated. A minimum lot size of 40 ha is to be introduced for these areas to prevent inappropriate subdivision.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Recognise and protect key environmental and cultural features.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Working closely with the Western Coastal Board to identify and protect key local features to complement the Victorian Coastal Strategy.
- Working with VicRoads to ensure a high quality design approach to the development of The Great Ocean Road and it's related arterial connections and signage.
- Minimising development between the Great Ocean Road and the coast to preserve views.
- Ensuring a quality design approach to new development having visual impact on the coastal area with the Siting and Design Guidelines for Structures on the Victorian Coast.
- Working with the Aboriginal Affairs Victoria to identify and protect key cultural features.

The Otways Ranges and Foothills

Key objective

The strategic challenge is to protect those key environmental features and catchment areas which are of National and Regional significance whilst facilitating key primary industries and a range of developments to add to the economic base of the Shire.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Support development which will provide economic and social benefits while not adversely affecting water catchments, timber production and environmental and landscape attributes.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Ensuring timber growing and harvesting is managed in accordance with the Otways Forest Management Plan and the Code of Forest Practice for Timber Production.
- Encouraging the development of activities such as eco-tourism, which can demonstrate sensitivity to the environment with economic benefit to the locality.
- Encouraging the development of small-scale activities, which are related to locally produced arts, crafts or products as a diversification of the economy.
- Working closely with Parks Victoria to develop and implement a consistent approach for land at the interface between public and private land.

The Northern Plains and Lakes

Key objective

To maintain the viability of large-scale agriculture and the retention of high quality land, recognising the environmental significance of key sites while allowing limited diversification into new uses and providing for the accommodation of tourist related development.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Support the retention of high quality agricultural land, lakes and other environmental assets.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Working closely with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment to identify and manage key areas of important ecological and cultural significance.
- Identifying through overlays as relevant areas of environmental quality or subject to environmental constraints.
- Encouraging land management practices that are sustainable and protect the environment.
- In association with the Country Fire Authority, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, the Municipal Fire Prevention Officer and other bodies, identifying and managing areas subject to high fire risk.
- Ensuring development is consistent with the Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy.
- Identifying and promoting activities, which illustrate and are sensitive to local Koori history and culture.
- Ensuring that existing dairying and other agricultural producers are supported from encroachment by conflicting development such as hobby farms.
- Identifying areas within the Ranges such as the Beech Forest/Lavers Hill Ridge where appropriate agricultural uses can be promoted. A minimum lot size of 40 ha is to be introduced for these areas to prevent inappropriate subdivision and to encourage ongoing agricultural enterprises.
- Protecting viable agricultural properties by introducing an 80 ha limit east of the Ballarat Road and north of the Princes Highway, otherwise 40 ha for the rest of the Shire. The variation in minimum lot size reflects the generally more extensive nature of agricultural enterprises in the north east part of the Shire and is designed to prevent the fragmentation of viable agricultural units into small hobby farms.
- Council will generally not support the creation of small lots for the future excision of dwellings because it wishes to prevent the progressive loss of high quality agricultural land and the introduction of potential sources of conflict with the long established agricultural activities.
- Encouraging the restructure of agricultural holdings into larger units.
- Protecting the lakes from environmental degradation by limiting adjacent development and maintaining high quality wastewater treatment in Colac.
- Identifying and protecting RAMSAR wetlands as an important ecological and economic asset.

- Providing for innovative agricultural activities that do not detract from the long-term sustainability of large-scale agriculture.

21.04-03 Settlement patterns and rural living

Key objective

To enhance the role of Colac and Apollo Bay as key settlements, to strengthen the linkages between these and the smaller communities of the Shire and provide limited opportunities for rural living where these do not detract from the key environmental qualities of the region.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

- Facilitate the development of the various settlements in accordance with the needs of each of the local communities.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that there is sufficient fully serviced residential land to meet the needs of the existing and future population.
- Encouraging future residential development into existing zoned and serviced areas to mitigate against an oversupply of residential zoned land, to make the most effective use of infrastructure services and hence to minimise the need for costly extensions to these facilities.
- Providing opportunities for the provision of a wide range of housing choices for residents, including for short-term holiday residents and tourist visitors.
- Using Clauses 54, 55 and 56 as the basis for assessing residential developments.
- Strictly limit rural residential development only to land close to existing settlements and which can be developed in accordance with Ministerial Direction No 6.
- Maintaining the low visual profile village character for Apollo Bay by limiting development to 8 metres or less in height.

(Also refer to Clause 21.04-10 Geographic Application for Colac, Apollo Bay, Birregurra and Smaller communities of the Shire)

21.04-04 Demographic profile**Key objective**

To provide a sound economic base to strengthen the proportion of younger age groups in the population and to increase its socio-economic profile to encourage a higher growth rate. (From 21.01-05)

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Facilitate further economic development to provide greater employment opportunities and hence an ability to retain and increase population levels throughout the municipality.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Promoting the expansion of employment opportunities in the Shire to encourage a wide range of people to locate in Colac Otway.
- Promoting the development of educational services in Colac to strengthen the employment skills of the population.
- Encouraging the provision of a full range of community services for all age groups to assist in the retention of the existing and future population.
- Promoting the provision of a range of residential developments to meet the needs of a changing population.

21.04-05 Primary industry**Key objective**

To build on existing strengths by promoting development which is environmentally responsible whilst facilitating the development of new value-adding processes and encouraging diversification into "niche" markets, especially those providing links to the tourist industry. (From 21.01-06)

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Support the development of primary industries which are ecologically sustainable, introduce diversity to the economy and contribute to the sustenance of value adding industries.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the establishment of specialised "boutique" industries using primary production as a means of diversifying the local economy and providing a link to the development of the tourist industry.
- Encouraging the location in Colac and other settlements of value adding or processing industries that assist the local primary industries.
- Promoting in association with the Corangamite Regional Catchment Management Authority management practices that are consistent with the Regional Catchment Strategy.
- Supporting the development of infrastructure in the Shire that helps sustain primary industry and is sensitive to the local environment.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote the use of agricultural land for productive and sustainable agriculture.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Supporting the use of agricultural land in units which are sustainable and economically productive.
- Discouraging the subdivision of rural land where this is unrelated to maintenance of sustainable agriculture.
- Facilitating innovation and diversification by support for the development of new crops, products and techniques that do not detract from land capability.
- Enabling diversification of farm income by support for small-scale tourist related farm development where environmental impact is sustainable.
- Ensuring clear definition of the urban/rural interface to minimise disruption to agricultural practices, to maintain a stable and enduring urban edge and to reduce expectations that the primary function of non-urban land will change.
- Encouraging locational and management practices for effluent intensive agricultural activities that will prevent adverse environmental impact.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote the development of forest industries that are economically viable and sustainable.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Promoting an approach to the development of forest industries, including farm/private forestry, which ensures a balance between the direct development of timber resources and the retention of important environmental habitats and qualities.
- Preparing a timber strategy dealing with land use, infrastructure and environmental, economic and social impacts.
- Implementing the Code of Forest Practice in assessing and managing timber industry developments.
- Encouraging close links between the timber and tourist industries to maximise employment synergies and the potential for longer-term employment growth.
- Ensuring timber industry proposals are consistent with the Corangamite Regional Catchment Strategy and the Otway Forest Management Plan.
- Working closely with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment to determine suitable locations for plantation forestry.
- Continuing to support the Timber Towns Victoria group of Councils.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote the development of fishing and related activities that are economically viable and sustainable.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Implementing the Apollo Bay South East Precinct Study.
- Encouraging the location of seafood processing industries in Apollo Bay.
- Promoting Apollo Bay Harbour as a safe and accessible boating harbour as a means of supporting its fishing role.
- Promoting the opportunities for aquaculture in the region.

21.04-06 Manufacturing and other employment.**Key objective**

To promote the strategic location of Colac in relation to markets and to develop synergies between existing industries, businesses and the education sector to facilitate developments that will help diversify the employment base of the region. (From 21.01-07)

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Support the development of industries that introduce diversity to the economy and contribute to the financial well being of value adding industries.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Maintaining strong linkages with all employment sectors to understand needs and opportunities for business in the region.
- Promoting the strategic location of Colac as a location for industry.
- Concentrating industrial development in existing zoned areas.
- Assisting industries within the main urban area of Colac to develop while minimising off-site effects.
- Ensuring the development approvals process clearly identifies the policies and requirements of council in facilitating development.
- Encouraging industries/businesses that seek to add value to existing primary producers throughout the region.
- Promoting the region as a location for relevant/appropriate government offices (eg Department of Natural Resources and Environment).
- Implementing recommendations contained in the report 'Planning for Industrial Development in Colac' - 1992.

21.04-07 Tourism**Key objective**

To encourage growth in tourism in a way that assists diversification in the economy and ensures the protection of those key environmental features that are the basis of the attraction to the area. (From 21.01-08)

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote tourism that has close linkages with local industries and the environment to assist in diversification of the shire economy.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Using the Colac Otway Tourist Strategy 1996 as the basis for forward planning and decision making.
- Encouraging the development of tourism trails based on the cultural heritage features of the Shire, the environmental assets of the Shire and link those to wider regional trails involving western and south western Victoria and south east South Australia. These tourism trails provide opportunities to facilitate interpretative signage on the Shire's history and development, and the geological and environmental features.
- Working with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, Parks Victoria and other government organisations on the identification, development and promotion of tourist facilities.
- Facilitating the provision of information and advice to rural landholders on establishing and managing rural tourism operations.
- Encouraging the development of agriculture based tourism industry as a means of assisting and diversifying the agricultural economy.
- Promoting heritage related businesses and the private and public gardens in towns and rural properties.
- Supporting high quality tourist and recreation developments that clearly provide linkages to other regional features such as the coast, the natural environment, the built and cultural heritage and specific local experiences.
- Implementing the Apollo Bay/Forest Eco-Centre.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

To protect key visual and environmental features which are of major significance.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Protecting and enhancing those natural and physical features which contribute to providing a 'tourism experience' including the natural environment, heritage elements, landscape features and cultural activities.
- Protecting the visual qualities of the Great Ocean Road and its adjoining coastal and rural landscapes. Consolidate tourism use and development into identified activity nodes along, or located off, the Great Ocean Road.

- Requiring tourist developments to demonstrate compatibility with the immediate area including land capability, compatibility with surrounding uses and the provision of adequate infrastructure services.
- Ensuring all new tourist developments adopt a high quality design approach and can demonstrate sympathy with the local environment.
- Undertaking a heritage/conservation study of the whole Shire to identify features that warrant protection and enhancement.
- Implementing the Council's Roadside Beautification and Streetscape Strategy.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

To provide a range of accommodation and related activities which encourages tourist visitation.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Facilitating the development of a more diverse range of accommodation to meet changing visitor needs.
- Supporting the development of a range of entertainment facilities in major settlements to encourage tourist retention rates.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

To maintain and enhance a transport network this supports the tourist industry.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- In consultation with VicRoads, developing a road program that will facilitate the development of tourism in the Shire with specific attention to visitor features such as rest areas, good visibility design and safe surfaces.
- In consultation with Vic Roads and other State agencies, improving the quality of design of signage and interpretative information on roads.

21.04-08 Transport and infrastructure**Key objective**

To build on the competitive advantage which the Shire enjoys because of its sound infrastructure base and in particular to enhance the transport network that balances provision for key primary industries with the sensitive needs of the environment and its related tourism industry. (From 21.01-09)

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Develop a balanced transport network for the needs of the region.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that decision making under the planning scheme reflects the Shire's corporate goals for Roads and Bridges as outlined in the Corporate Plan and the Roads Hierarchy Study once completed.
- Completing the Council's Public Transport Strategy.
- Continuing to support the Timber Towns Association moves to obtain greater assistance for timber carrying routes.
- In consultation with VicRoads and Tourism Victoria, identifying and improving key routes that assist in the development of the tourist industry in the region.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Develop a road network which enhances the accessibility of the region.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Protecting and enhancing the key highway routes, Princes Highway, Great Ocean Road, the Ballarat – Colac route via Cressy, the Colac to Apollo Bay routes via Skenes Creek/Forest and Lavers Hill as the key Shire network.
- Maintaining and developing key local routes between settlements to enhance their accessibility to services and safety in times of emergency.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Improve air and train services to the region.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Protecting key rail networks and facilitate, as practicable, improvements to the passenger and freight services.
- Ensuring that development of the Colac and Apollo Bay airfields is not prejudiced by encroaching urban development.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Improve the availability and quality of utility infrastructure.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Ensuring that appropriate infrastructure is provided to all new development and that infrastructure to existing development is, where necessary, progressively upgraded to currently accepted standards.
- Council will encourage the use of utility services and infrastructure which minimises adverse environmental impacts and which contribute to sustainable resource use.

21.04-09 Community services**Key objective**

To maintain and enhance a network of facilities that provides an adequate and cost effective service to communities throughout the Shire. (From 21.01-10)

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Deliver the most cost-effective services to all the communities in the Shire.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Promoting Colac as a regional centre for community services to enhance its overall capability to serve the needs of the region.
- Promoting Colac as a centre of excellence in educational and health facilities and build on existing facilities to attract and maintain industry and other employment generating enterprises to the Shire
- Working closely with government agencies to encourage Consolidation of facilities and services in the Shire.
- Examining innovative ways of delivering community services to maximise cost effectiveness of Council's service.
- Completing and implementing the Council's recreation needs study.

21.04-10 Geographic Application**21.04-10 Apollo Bay****Key objective**

To develop Apollo Bay as an attractive residential community which provides high quality environment as a significant tourist centre.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote the development of a high quality identity for Apollo Bay.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Implementing the streetscape and landscape strategy for the Main Street.
- Identifying and protecting key buildings that contribute to, and can maintain the village character of Apollo Bay.
- Implementing the Apollo Bay South East Precinct Study.
- Developing a high quality environment on the Apollo Bay Foreshore.
- Facilitating the provision of a range of attractive and high quality facilities for visitors in the centre of the community.
- Protecting the high quality landscape features of the surrounding land.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Provide a range of opportunities for residential development to match the needs of the local community and visitors.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the development of a range of house sizes and types.
- Concentrating residential development within existing zoned areas.
- Providing for adequately zoned land for approximately 10 years growth.
- Limiting further subdivision and development in the low-lying area between Apollo Bay and the surrounding hills.
- Facilitating limited rural residential development only in those areas immediately adjoining the city which meet the criteria contained in Ministerial Guideline No 6 and which are consistent with the Apollo Bay Framework Plan.
- Providing for a limited range of high quality visitor accommodation which is sympathetic to the residential environment.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructure to support the development of Apollo Bay in an environmentally sensitive way.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Promoting sympathetic improvements to the Great Ocean Road in the interests of promoting tourism.
- Promoting improvements to the local road network, particularly links with Colac, to support the residential qualities of the community and encourage tourism.
- Safeguarding opportunities for improvements to the Apollo Bay Airport.
- Facilitating the maintenance and enhancement of the community's wastewater treatment facilities to cope with urban growth.
- Facilitating improvements in water quality.
- Facilitating the protection of essential water supply catchments and facilities to ensure maintenance of high quality water supplies.
- Preparing a development contributions plan for the area.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote provision of Community services in Apollo Bay.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Supporting further education and health services in the area as community needs change.
- Encouraging the development of ancillary services to the key institutions.
- Preparing development contributions plan for the town.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote the commercial future of Apollo Bay.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the development of small-scale economic activities that complements existing industries.
- Encouraging the development of a variety of tourist accommodation in locations sympathetic of the residential environment.
- Encouraging the development of recreation and entertainment facilities to support the tourist market.
- Promoting high quality design approach to tourist developments to enhance the local environment.
- Focusing retailing facilities within the existing core commercial area.
- Ensuring that, when required, there is sufficient suitably zoned land on the west side of Pascoe Street to allow for a wide range of commercial uses to establish.

Reference documents:

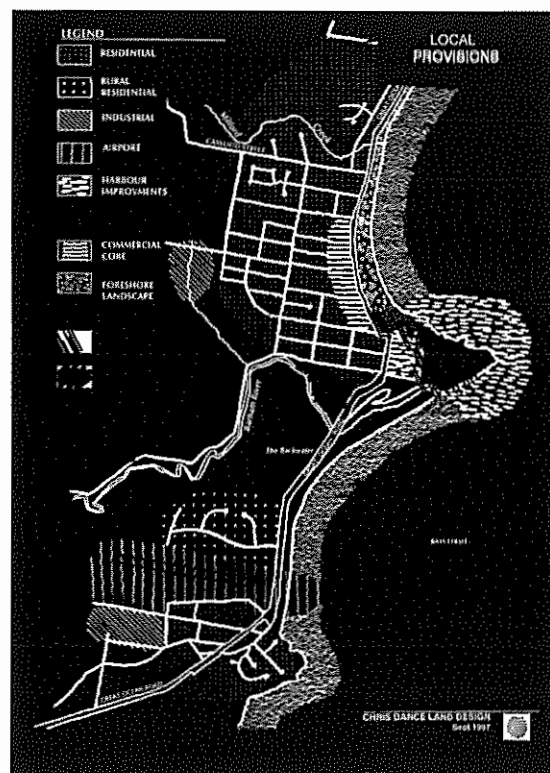
Otway Coastal Towns Study 1987

Apollo Bay - the South East Precinct - Chris Dance Land Design Pty Ltd. 1997

Colac Otway Tourism Strategy – Colac Otway Tourism – 1996

Apollo Bay Streetscape Study – Green and Dale

Apollo Bay Car Park Study – PPK

Apollo Bay Framework Plan

21.04-11 Birregurra**Key objective**

To promote Birregurra as a community with a viable economic future and an attractive residential environment.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Maintain and enhance the quality of Birregurra as a residential environment.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Identifying and protecting heritage and other key features of the community.
- Developing an overall streetscape and landscape policy and action plan for the community.
- Requiring all new development to provide for the retention and absorption of wastewater within the boundary of any lot in accordance with the Septic Tanks Code of Practice.
- Limiting rural residential development to the south west of the community.
- Encouraging commercial development in the existing centre to be sympathetic to existing streetscape.
- Using Clauses 54, 55 and 56 as the basis for decision making on residential developments.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructure to support the development of Birregurra in an environmentally sensitive way.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Maintaining and protecting water supply facilities from the Barwon river by not allowing inappropriate development.
- Restricting development to levels less than the 146m contour until augmentation of water supply.
- In conjunction with Barwon Water Authority, assessing the needs and opportunities for the provision of reticulated sewerage.
- Maintaining and enhancing the local road network, particularly links with Colac, to support viability of Birregurra and encourage tourism.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote the economic future of Birregurra.

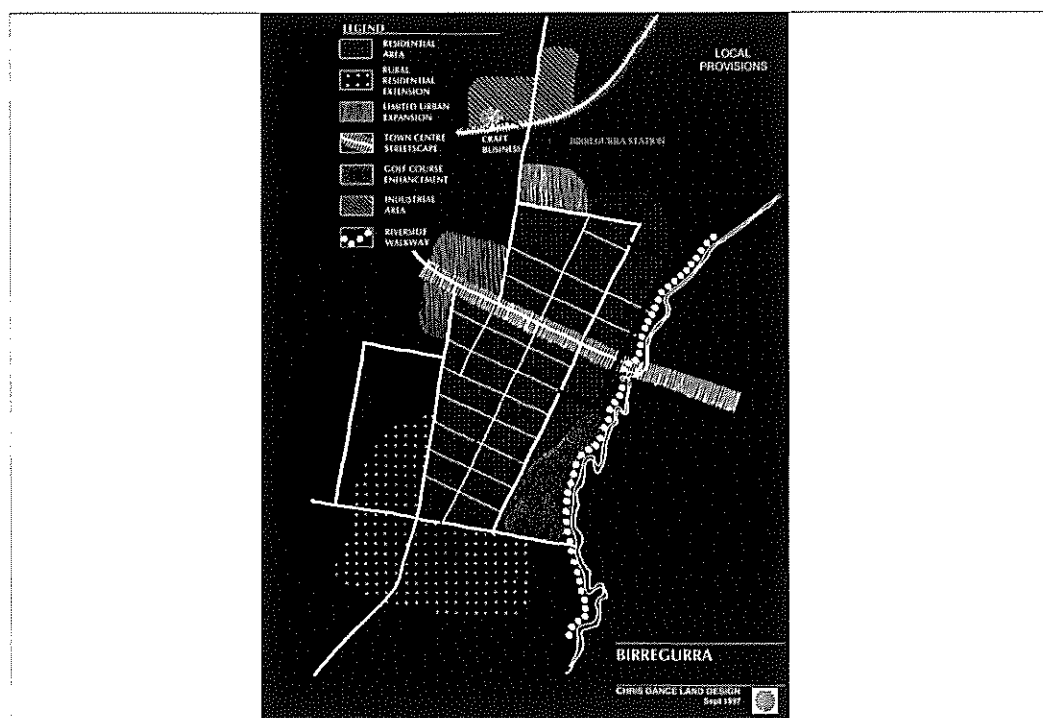
Implementation will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the development of small-scale economic activity which complements the resources and industries of the region and which encourages tourism.

- Encouraging the development of "linked trails" of related environmental experience.
- Encouraging the location of small-scale tourist accommodation facilities in the community.
- Facilitating new industries related to the existing sawmill.
- Encouraging use of the railway station buildings.

Reference document:

Birregurra Township - Structure Plan 1993

Birregurra Framework Plan

21.04-12 Colac**Key objective**

To promote the development of Colac as the key centre of economic and community focus for the Shire and the surrounding area.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote the commercial and industrial strength of Colac.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Promoting the city as a regional centre for retail and business investment.
- Concentrating commercial and retail facilities in the central area.
- Identifying key industrial uses and ensuring adequate supplies of suitable land.
- Focusing key industrial developments on major sites to east and west of the town.
- Refining the recommendations of Planning for Industrial development in Colac Report.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote a clear identity for the city as a high quality environment.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Undertaking an urban design study for the central commercial and adjoining areas and develop clear links between key activity centres.
- Developing clear design guidelines for development on the approaches to the city from East and West.
- Implementing Streetscape improvements in approaches to strengthen the city's image and identity.
- In consultation with the commercial and retail interests continuing the program of improvements which strengthens the identity and character of the City Centre as an attractive place for residents and tourists.
- Promoting the Lake frontage as a high quality environment for visitor and local use. Complete and implement the Lake Foreshore Plan.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote the city as a key regional provider of Cultural and Community services.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Implementing the Council's Arts and Culture Strategy.
- Promoting the development of an Arts and Cultural Centre.
- Supporting and enhancing as practicable the further education and health services in the city.

- Encouraging the development of ancillary services to the key institutions.
- Promoting Colac as a central location for the consolidation of public and private services in the region.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructure to support the growth and development of the city in an environmentally sensitive way.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Facilitating as practicable improvements to the West Coast Rail Service.
- Promoting improvements to the Princes Highway in the region.
- Promoting improvements to roads that support the growth of primary industries in the region in a way that balances with the needs of tourism and the local population.
- Implementing the Colac Traffic Management Study.
- Safeguarding opportunities for improvements to the Colac airport.
- Facilitating the maintenance and enhancement of the city's wastewater treatment facilities to cope with urban growth.
- Protecting essential water supply catchments and facilities to ensure maintenance of high quality water supplies.
- Preparing a development contributions plan for the city.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Provide a range of opportunities for residential development to match the changing needs of the local community.

Implementation will be achieved by:

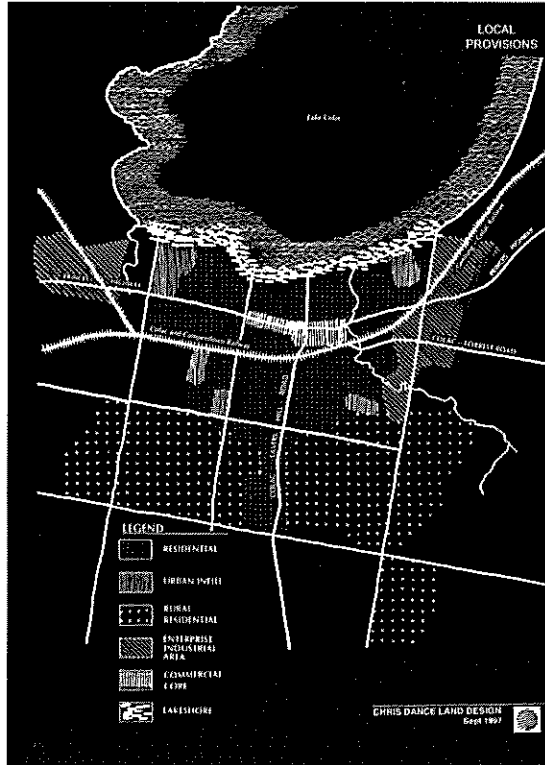
- Encouraging the development of a range of dwelling sizes and types to meet the needs of the community.
- Concentrating residential development within existing zoned areas.
- Providing for adequately zoned land for approx. 10 years growth.
- Limiting further subdivision and development in the low-lying area between Colac and Elliminyt until an environmental assessment is carried out.
- Facilitating appropriate rural residential development only in those areas immediately adjoining the city which meet the criteria contained in Ministerial Guideline No 6 and which are consistent with the Colac Framework Plan.

Reference documents:

Colac Central Area Business Area Strategy Plan 1993

Colac Housing and Accommodation Strategy 2002

Colac Framework Plan



21.04-13 Smaller communities of the Shire (Kennett River, Wye River, Skenes Creek, Lavers Hill, Forrest Beech Forest, Barwon Downs, Beeac, Cressy, Swan Marsh, Warrion, Pirron Yallock, Coragulac, Cororooke, Gellibrand and Separation Creek)[AO1]

Key objective

To provide an attractive, safe, residential environment and strengthen the economic future of the small communities in the Shire.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Promote the economic future of small communities.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the development of small-scale economic activity which complements the resources and industries of the region.
- Encouraging in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources and Environment and related organisations the development of linked network of tourist facilities that focus on the natural environment and local communities.
- Encouraging the development of "linked trails" of related environmental experience.
- Encouraging the location of tourist accommodation facilities within small communities in the region.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Facilitate the provision of necessary infrastructure to support the development of small communities in an environmentally sensitive way.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Promoting sympathetic improvements to the Great Ocean Road and to the local road network, particularly links with Colac, to support viability of the local communities and encourage tourism.
- Maintaining and enhancing the availability of community services to small communities in the most cost-effective way.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

Maintain and enhance the environmental quality of small towns.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the development of high quality design input to development in small communities.
- Identifying and promoting key features of local communities that highlight their identity.
- Restricting the expansion of communities in areas of landslip and high fire risk.
- Encouraging the implementation of landscape features that recognise indigenous flora and fauna.

Neighbourhood Character in Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek.

Key Objective

To protect the distinctive landscape qualities and coastal setting of the Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek townships

▪ Character Precincts

The Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study, 2005 (Planisphere) identified character precincts within each of the townships. (see Map 1 Character Precinct Map)

The vision and preferred character statement for the character precincts are as follows

Skenes Creek

Vision

Skenes Creek is a coastal hamlet set on rolling topography at the base of the Otway Ranges. There is a sense of openness to the town created by the spacious siting of buildings and expansive views to the coast and hillsides. A green wedge corridor through the centre of the township links the town with a vegetated hillside backdrop and is enhanced by regeneration of indigenous and appropriate coastal shrubs around dwellings and public areas.

Preferred Character Statements

Skenes Creek 1

This precinct provides a native 'green wedge' for the whole township, extending from the hillslopes behind the town to the Great Ocean Road. The character of the precinct will be strengthened by the planting and regeneration of indigenous and native vegetation. Dwellings will be set far enough apart to accommodate substantial native bush areas including canopy trees, and will be set substantially below the vegetation canopy. The semi-rural feel of the area will be retained by the lack of fencing and frequent unmade roads. Views to the dwellings will be softened by native vegetation in frontages to major roads and in the public domain along road verges.

Skenes Creek 2

This precinct will continue to be characterised by diverse coastal dwellings set amongst established coastal gardens. The sense of openness will be maintained by setting the buildings apart, minimising intrusive front fencing, and encouraging building forms that respect views to the surrounding hills and coast. The precinct will be united by consistent mature plantings of native and exotic coastal species in the public and private domains.

Kennett River

Vision

The Kennett River township nestles into the vegetated ridges and hillslopes that form the Kennett River Valley. In the flatter areas of the town established native trees and vegetation around houses, the River, and wetlands provide natural links to the adjoining heavily vegetated hill faces. Bushy ridgelines surround the town and development in prominent locations and slopes is hidden from view.

*Preferred Character Statements***Kennett River 1**

This precinct will be dominated by continuous native bush, with dwellings set below and amongst remnant canopy trees. Frontages will be open and consist of diverse native understorey that screens views of buildings from roads. The low scale dwellings will avoid prominent locations and ridgelines, and will be sited to provide for the reasonable sharing of views to the coast where available. Vegetation will be retained or replaced with any new developments to screen buildings when viewed from the Great Ocean Road. Innovative house styles will be encouraged of a scale, materials and colours that blend with the bush character and follow the topography. The informal bush character of the precinct will be assisted by the streetscape planting and lack of formal kerbing.

Kennett River 2

This precinct will consist of coastal style dwellings set amongst gardens of native species. A spacious garden character will be maintained by setting buildings apart and encouraging landscaping between dwellings. Dwellings will be carefully designed, sited and landscaped to be unobtrusive when viewed from roads and to provide for a sharing of views to the coast where available. Trees in both public and private domains will provide a sense of continuity through the precinct and visually link with the adjacent bushland areas.

Wye River and Separation Creek*Vision*

Wye River and Separation Creek together form a loosely defined residential settlement at the base of the Otway hills. The watercourses dividing the residential areas are key focal points and retain indigenous vegetation, which is reflected in private gardens and streetscapes. The forested hillsides and coast are important and visible features throughout the settlements. Housing on the steeper slopes is set into the landscape and is largely hidden from view from the Great Ocean Road.

*Preferred Character Statements***Wye River 1**

This precinct will continue to be characterised by dominant native bush that forms a consistent canopy, linking to the adjacent bushland. Dwelling scale, bulk and siting will respond to the site and topography, allowing space and setbacks to maintain native bush, both as canopy and understorey. Buildings will be set beneath the canopy, and appropriately sited and designed so as to allow for the sharing of views to the coast where available, and to be hidden from view from the Great Ocean Road. The informality of the streetscapes will be retained by the lack of front fencing, frequent unmade roads and remnant vegetation.

Wye River 2

This precinct will achieve a more consistent native vegetation coverage to provide a unifying feature throughout. Space around dwellings will be sufficient to maintain trees and understorey, and minimises the appearance of building bulk and density. On hill slopes, buildings will relate to topography and be set amongst and beneath a dominant, native tree canopy. Buildings and structures in prominent locations when viewed from the Great Ocean Road will be designed to reduce their visual intrusion. Retention and planting of canopy trees in the public domain and around dwellings will be encouraged to establish a consistent tree canopy.

Separation Creek 1

This precinct will consist of a mix of low, coastal style dwellings and newer coastal styles, in established gardens and amongst native canopy trees in the vegetated hillfaces. Dwellings will be of materials and colours that reflect the coastal setting, and be designed and sited so as to minimise intrusion into views from roads, public spaces and adjacent dwellings and impact on the topography. Establishment of native and coastal trees in public and private gardens will unite the precinct and provide visual links to the surrounding bushland and creek environs.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Applying the Significant Landscape Overlay to protect the distinctive qualities and landscape significance of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek townships.
- Applying the Neighbourhood Character Overlay to ensure that new development reflects the preferred character of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek townships.
- Applying the Design and Development Overlay to ensure that the siting and design of new development achieves the neighbourhood character vision and preferred character of precincts within Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek townships.

Reference Documents:

Otway Coastal Towns Study 1987

Colac Otway Tourism Strategy 1996

Otway Rural Hinterland and Coastal Area Study - Strategic Planning Pty Ltd. 1993

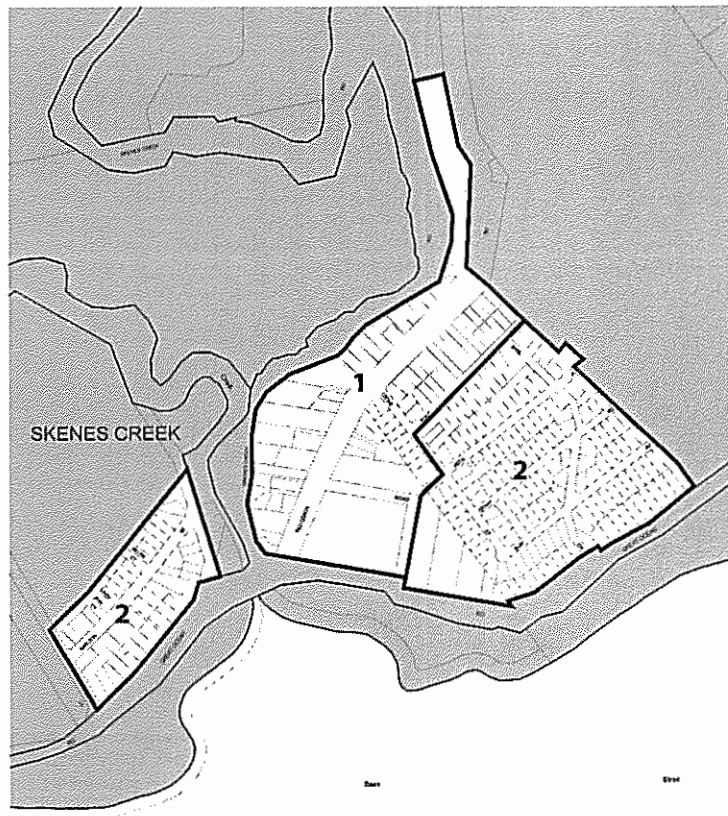
Wye River Structure Plan

Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study, Planisphere 2005, including Precinct Brochures.

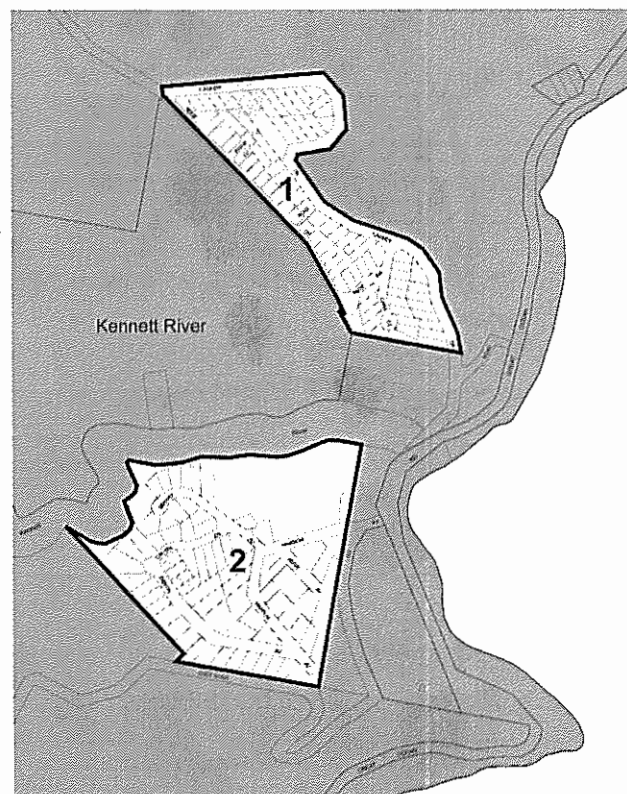
COLAC OTWAY PLANNING SCHEME

Maps of Character Precincts

SKENES CREEK

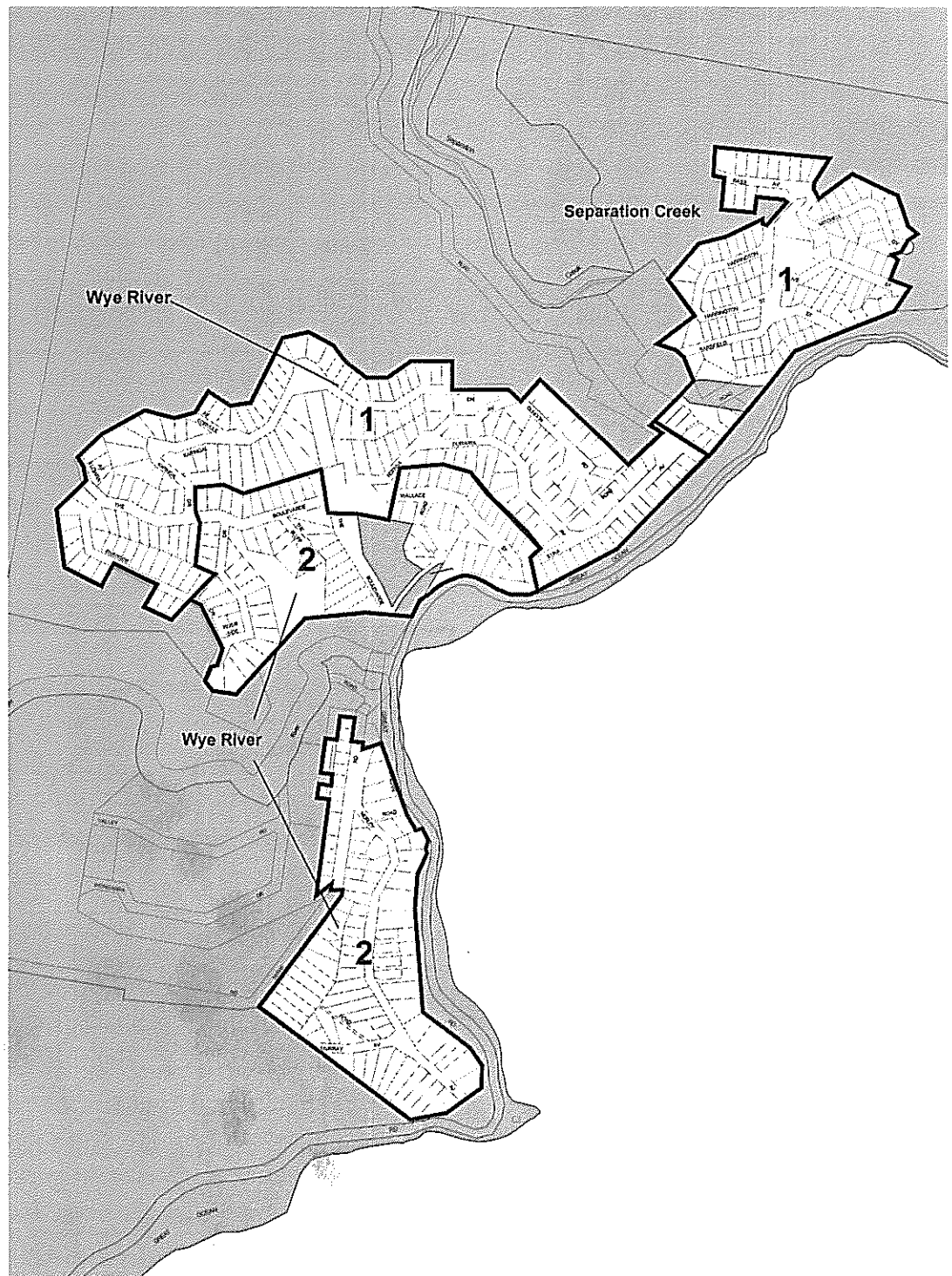


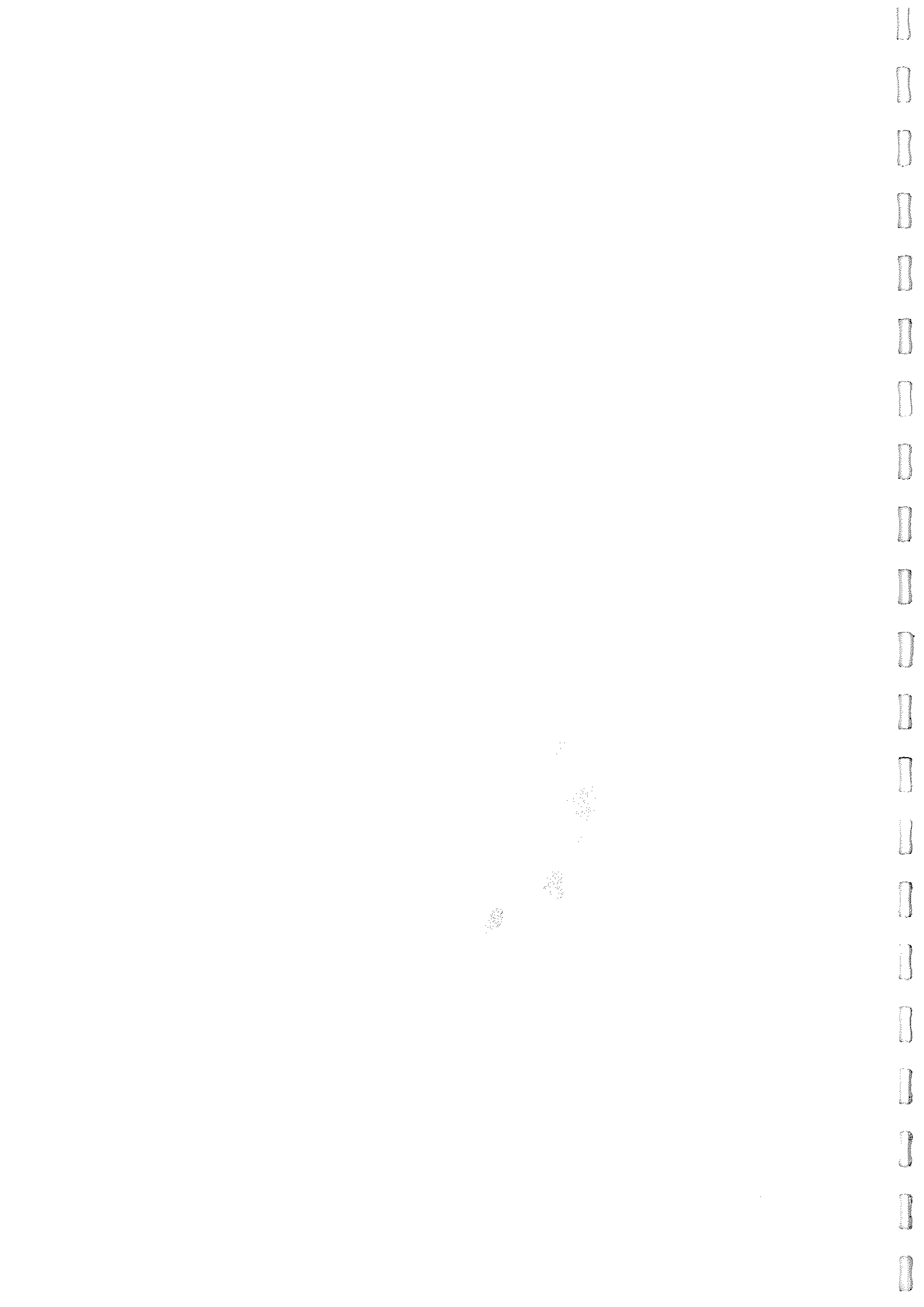
KENNETT RIVER





WYE RIVER / SEPARATION CREEK





22.05 COASTAL AND OTWAY RANGES TOWNSHIPS

This policy applies to all land located within Apollo Bay, Marengo, Grey River, Beech Forest, Lavers Hill, Gellibrand, Forest and Wongarra townships included in the Residential 1, Township, Low Density Residential, Business 1, Business 2, Business 4 and Industrial 1 Zones.

22.05-01 Policy Basis

The coastal and Otway Ranges township are located along the spectacular Great Ocean Road and nestled within the majestic and beautiful Otway Ranges. This policy builds upon the MSS which identifies the importance of protecting the character of the Otway Coast and hinterland townships.

22.05-02 Objective

To ensure that all development, use and subdivision within these settlements recognises their different roles as centres containing a range of community and other facilities, while also recognising the unique coastal and Otways Ranges environment and the need to minimise the visual impact of development on the scenic coastal and Otways Ranges environment.

22.05-03 Policy*Exercising discretion*

It is policy that the following matters be taken into account when considering applications to use and develop land within these townships.

Design of Buildings

The design, siting, mass and scale of new development should have regard to:

- The role of the settlement within the Shire and whether it is the major development node or a settlement with limited development potential and only serving the immediate community;
- The visual character of the particular settlement and the likely impact of the development on the visual amenity of that settlement.
- The views available to the site from the Great Ocean Road and major viewing points in the Otway Ranges and the likely impact of the development on these views.

Building Height

New development which comprises more than 2 storeys or is more than 8 metres above natural ground level will be discouraged unless special characteristics of the site justify a higher structure and no off-site detriment is caused.

Site Coverage

Building site coverage of more than 50% is discouraged, except on business zoned land.

Roof form

The slope of the roof relates to the topography of the surrounding landform. Dominant or multiple angular roof slopes and designs will be discouraged.

External building appearance

External building material colours should be of muted toning and roofing material should be non-reflective. All external building materials should be in harmony with the surrounding landscape of each settlement.

Landscaping

Landscaping should be provided so that a new development is effectively blended into the surrounding area. This may be achieved by landscaping that:

- Uses a mixture of low, medium and high growing native trees and shrubs, including some species of trees with a growing height above the roof level of the proposed building.
- Provides replacement planting for vegetation that is removed to provide for new buildings or works.
- Is consistent with the recommendations of the Apollo Bay Streetscape Study in terms of scale and plant types, where appropriate.

Landscaping should be completed within 12 months of the completion of a development or the commencement of a new use.

SCHEDULE 2 TO THE SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE OVERLAY

Shown on the planning scheme map as **SLO2**

COASTAL TOWNS: SKENES CREEK, KENNETT RIVER, WYE RIVER AND SEPARATION CREEK**1.0 Statement of nature and key elements of landscape**

The landscape of the Great Ocean Road, within which the settlements of Skenes Creek, Wye River, Separation Creek and Kennett River are located is of national importance. The factors contributing to the significance of the landscape of the Great Ocean Road environs are detailed in the Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study (GORRLAS) 2003.

The distinctive qualities and landscape significance of Skenes Creek township locality is described in the GORRLAS as the area where a number of different landscape elements intersect in a dramatic manner, including low sea coast, topographic edge of the Otway Ranges sweeping down to the narrow coastal strip, edge of the forest, and the incised, vegetated creek valleys. The edges and inter-relationships between these elements create a landscape setting of national significance. (Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study, 2003, Otway Foothills, Valleys and Uplands, Precinct 2.4)

The townships of Wye River, Separation Creek and Kennett River are placed within Precinct 4.1 'Otway Ranges Forest and Coast' and the Otway Forest and Coast landscape type. The distinctive qualities of the precinct are described as:

"containing large areas of dense, tall forest cover in hilly terrain, extending to the sea with high, rugged cliffs in places. In some coastal locations the vegetation is parser and smaller in scale....While the entire forest is a significant part of the region's landscape character, particular parts have greater significance. The Great Ocean Road hugs coastline from Lorne to Kennett River, offering some of the most dramatic cliff and coastal scenery able to be viewed by car or bus anywhere in the world and is a landscape of national significance. ...the remainder of the coastal landscape in the precinct (is) of state significance."

(Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study, Precinct Package 4.1, p2)

The location and extent of the townships within this landscape, as well as the relationship of the buildings in the towns to the landscape, are of critical importance to the maintenance of the character of the Great Ocean Road region. The siting, design, height, site coverage and materials of all buildings, and vegetation around buildings and public domain treatments all contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of the key landscape characteristics of the region.

2.0 Landscape character objective to be achieved

The general landscape objectives to be achieved include:

- To increase the use of indigenous vegetation to highlight natural features within the precinct.
- To retain the contrasts between landscape elements within the precinct.
- To ensure that development that occurs on hill faces or in other prominent locations is not highly visible.

- To minimise the visual impact of signage and other infrastructure, particularly in coastal areas, hill faces and ridges.
- To protect the clear, sweeping views to the ocean available from the precinct.
- To retain the dominance of an indigenous natural landscape in coastal areas, between townships, particularly from the Great Ocean Road.

3.0 Permit requirement

A permit is required to:

- Construct a building.
- Construct or carry out works.

A permit is required to remove, destroy or lop a tree. This does not apply to:

- A tree having a single trunk circumference less than 0.5 metre at a height of one metre above the ground level.
- The pruning of a tree for regeneration or ornamental shaping.
- A tree which is dead or dying.

4.0 Decision guidelines

Before deciding on an application to construct a building or construct or carry out works, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- The landscaping plan accompanying the application, detailing existing vegetation, vegetation to be removed, new plantings incorporating native and indigenous species with exclusive use of exotic species to be avoided.
- Whether the vehicle access and storage proposed has been designed to minimise excavation, loss of vegetation and dominance of car storage facilities.
- The impact of the proposed development on the conservation of trees.
- The impact of the proposed development on natural ground levels and drainage patterns which may have a detrimental impact on the health and viability of surrounding trees.
- The maintenance of an adequate buffer strip along roads and between private gardens.

Before deciding on an application to remove, lop or destroy a tree, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- The species of vegetation, its age, health and growth characteristics.
- The location of the vegetation on the land and its contribution to the lot garden area, neighbourhood and streetscape character.
- Whether the tree is isolated or part of a grouping.
- The potential to achieve an average density of one tree reaching a height of over 15 metres to each 150 square metres of site area.
- The availability of sufficient unencumbered land to provide for replacement planting.
- The impact of the tree on the structural integrity of existing buildings including foundations.
- Other options for further planting on the site.

- Vegetation management requirements to reduce fire hazard, prevent erosion and maintain flood control measures.

5.0 Reference Documents

Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study, 2005 (Planisphere), including the Precinct brochures.



SCHEDULE 4 TO THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OVERLAY

Shown on the planning scheme map as **DDO4**

COASTAL TOWNS: SKENES CREEK, KENNETT RIVER, WYE RIVER AND SEPARATION CREEK**1.0 Design objectives**

To achieve the neighbourhood character Vision for the townships and preferred character of each Precinct as identified in Clause 21.04-13 of the Municipal Strategic Statement and in the Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study, 2005.

To ensure that fence styles and heights reflect the predominant and preferred character of the townships.

To ensure that lot sizes are sufficient to accommodate adequate vegetation, including substantial trees, dwellings that meet the township Visions and preferred character, and provide space for wildfire management requirements.

2.0 Buildings and works

A permit is required to construct a fence, other than:

- a post and wire fence that is less than 1.2 metres in height if on the front boundary
- a post and wire fence that is less than 1.5m in height if on any other boundary.

A permit is not required to construct a building or carry out works.

3.0 Subdivision

A new lot must have the following minimum lot size in the relevant Precinct as shown on the Character Precinct Map at Clause 21.04-13:

PRECINCT	MINIMUM LOT SIZE (SQ.M.)	AVERAGE LOT SIZE IF 4 OR MORE THAN 4 LOTS CREATED (SQ.M.)
Wye River 1	800	900
Wye River 2	800	1000
Kennett River 1	600	700
Kennett River 2	900	1100
Separation Creek 1	600	800
Skenes Creek 1	900	1300
Skenes Creek 2	600	700

Lots created by a subdivision must:

- Provide for a dwelling or dwellings that will meet the Vision for the township, the preferred character of the Precinct and associated design guidelines; and
- Where creating a battle-axe style lot, not include the area of any driveway in the lot area calculations; and
- Where creating new streets, incorporate layout and public domain features, such as street trees and kerbing that meet the township Vision and preferred character of the Precinct.

4.0 Decision guidelines

Before deciding on an application the responsible authority must consider:

- The impact of the proposed development on the achievement of the Vision for the township, preferred character of the relevant Precinct and associated design guidelines.
- The extent to which the proposed subdivision will have an adverse impact on the retention of existing vegetation.

5.0 Reference documents

Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study, Planisphere 2005, including Precinct Brochures.

SCHEDULE 1 TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER OVERLAY

Shown on the planning scheme map as **NCO1**

COASTAL TOWNS: SKENES CREEK, KENNETT RIVER, WYE RIVER AND SEPARATION CREEK**1.0 Statement of neighbourhood character**

The coastal townships of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek, all exhibit similar characteristics common to their location along one of the most picturesque landscapes of Victoria. The townships are undergoing continued pressure for growth and redevelopment, as are most coastal locations, and they provide a popular place of permanent residence, intermittent residence by holiday home owners and recreation.

The significance of the Great Ocean Road landscape is recognized in the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy, and its associated Great Ocean Road Region Landscape Assessment Study. The townships are a highly visible component of the Great Ocean Road landscape, and it is important to ensure that the long term growth and change in these settlements retains the characteristics recognized in these studies, and valued by those who live and visit there.

The preferred character of the townships is characterized by buildings nestled within the often steep topography and the indigenous and native vegetation. The buildings sit below the tree canopy height, and there is sufficient space around them to accommodate substantial vegetation, as well as clearances required for wildfire management. The buildings are of varying low scale designs, but contain elements that respond to the coastal location including a predominance of non-masonry materials, metal roofing, balconies and transparent balustrades. Buildings typically have flat or single pitch roofs, and while often being two storey or split level, they do not dominate their surrounds. A lack of or transparent styles of fencing enables the vegetation to flow across boundaries and between the public and private domains, and roads with unmade edges add to the informal feel of the townships.

2.0 Neighbourhood character objectives

To ensure that new buildings and works reflect the preferred character of the surrounding area.

To encourage the retention of existing trees, the siting of buildings within the vegetation and landform, and below the predominant tree canopy height.

To ensure new buildings reflect and complement the scale, setback, siting, materials and overall form of existing buildings.

To ensure the townships retain an informal, open, spacious character created by the dominance of vegetation, low scale buildings and a lack of solid fencing.

3.0 Permit requirement

A permit is required:

- To construct or extend an outbuilding normal to a dwelling.
- To remove, destroy or lop a tree.
- To construct an outdoor swimming pool associated with a dwelling.

COLAC OTWAY PLANNING SCHEME

4.0

Modification to Clause 54 and Clause 55 standards

STANDARD	MODIFIED REQUIREMENT
A3 and B6	STREET SETBACK Walls of buildings should be setback at least 7 metres from the front street. Side street setback as specified in the Tables to Standards A3 and B6 continue to apply.
A4 and B7	BUILDING HEIGHT The maximum building height should not exceed 8 metres or two storeys, whichever is the lesser. Buildings are to be stepped to follow the contours of the site. Changes of building height between existing buildings and new buildings should be graduated by recessing the upper levels from the ground level.
A5 and B8	SITE COVERAGE The site area covered by buildings should not exceed the following amounts in the Precincts as shown on the Character Precinct Map at Clause 21.04-13: Wye River Precinct 1 – 20% Wye River Precinct 2 – 20% Kennett River Precinct 1 – 20% Kennett River Precinct 2 – 20% Separation Creek Precinct 1 – 25% Skenes Creek Precinct 1 – 20% Skenes Creek Precinct 2 – 25%
A8	SIGNIFICANT TREES The siting of new buildings should provide for the retention of existing trees and vegetation and provide adequate space on site for the planting of new indigenous shrubs and trees. The area of the site that is covered by buildings and hard surfaces, including swimming pools and tennis courts, should not exceed the following amounts in the Precincts as shown on the Character Precinct Map at Clause 21.04-13: Wye River Precinct 1 – 30% Wye River Precinct 2 – 30% Kennett River Precinct 1 – 30% Kennett River Precinct 2 – 30% Separation Creek Precinct 1 – 35% Skenes Creek Precinct 1 – 30% Skenes Creek Precinct 2 – 35%
A10 and B17	SIDE AND REAR SETBACKS A new building should be set back from both side boundaries a minimum of 3 metres. A new building should be setback a minimum of 5 metres from the rear boundary. A new building should be setback from the side or rear boundary a minimum of 3 or 5 metres as required above, plus 0.3 metres for every metre of height over 3.6 metres up to 6.9 metres, plus 1 metre for every metre of height over 6.9 metres. Sunblinds, verandahs, balconies, porches, eaves, fascias, gutters, chimneys, flues, pipes, domestic fuel or water tanks, and heating or cooling equipment associated with a dwelling, may encroach into the setbacks of this standard.
A11 and B18	WALLS ON BOUNDARIES A new wall should not be constructed on a boundary.
A19 and B31	DESIGN DETAIL The design of buildings, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of storeys, • Verandahs, eaves and parapets, • Materials, colours and finishes, and

COLAC OTWAY PLANNING SCHEME

STANDARD	MODIFIED REQUIREMENT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building siting, including space around buildings should respect the preferred neighbourhood character of the area. <p>Garage and car port design should be visually unobtrusive and compatible with the development and the preferred neighbourhood character.</p>
A20 and B32	<p>FRONT FENCE HEIGHT</p> <p>The design of front fences should complement the design front fences on adjoining properties.</p> <p>A front fence within 3 metres of a street should not exceed a height of 1.2 metres and should be at least 50% transparent.</p>
B13	<p>LANDSCAPING</p> <p>The landscaping should enhance the indigenous and native vegetated character of the area.</p> <p>The siting of new buildings should provide for the retention of existing trees and vegetation and provide adequate space on site for the planting of new indigenous shrubs and trees.</p> <p>The area of the site that is covered by buildings and hard surfaces, including swimming pools and tennis courts, should not exceed the following amounts in the Precincts as shown on the Character Precinct Map at Clause 21.04-13:</p> <p>Wye River Precinct 1 – 30%</p> <p>Wye River Precinct 2 – 30%</p> <p>Kennett River Precinct 1 – 30%</p> <p>Kennett River Precinct 2 – 30%</p> <p>Separation Creek Precinct 1 – 35%</p> <p>Skenes Creek Precinct 1 – 30%</p> <p>Skenes Creek Precinct 2 – 35%</p>

5.0 Decision guidelines

Before deciding on an application, the responsible authority must consider, as appropriate:

- The extent to which any building to be extended or otherwise modified, contributes to the township vision and preferred character of the area.
- The extent to which the siting, bulk, form and appearance of proposed buildings or works assists in meeting and enhancing the character of the area.
- Whether the building is located to ensure large setbacks from the side and rear boundaries.
- Whether the new building respects the predominantly low scale forms in the area.
- The appropriateness of the proposed building materials.

Reference

Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study, Planisphere 2005, including Precinct Brochures.



SCHEDULE TO CLAUSES 61.01 - 61.04 (INCLUSIVE)

Responsible authority for administering and enforcing this scheme	<p>The Minister for Planning is the responsible authority for considering and determining applications, in accordance with Divisions 1, 2, and 3 of Part 4 of the Planning and Environment Act 1987 and for approving matters required by the scheme to be done to the satisfaction of the responsible authority in relation to the use and development of land for the purpose of a Wind energy facility with a capacity greater than 30 megawatts.</p> <p>The Colac Otway Shire Council is the responsible authority for administering and enforcing the scheme for all other matters.</p>
Person or responsible authority for issuing planning certificates	Colac Otway Shire Council
Area covered by this scheme	Colac Otway Shire municipal district and the area of the Apollo Bay harbour between the land and the breakwaters.
Maps comprising part of this scheme	<p>Zoning Maps sheets 1-30 inclusive.</p> <p>Environmental Significance Overlay maps:</p> <p>1ESO2, 1ESO4, 2ESO2, 2ESO3, 2ESO4, 3ESO2, 3ESO4, 4ESO4, 5ESO, 5ESO2, 5ESO4, 9ESO2, 9ESO4, 10ESO2, 10ESO4, 11ESO2, 12ESO4, 14ESO4, 15ESO1, 15ESO2, 15ESO3, 16ESO1, 16ESO2, 16ESO3, 16ESO4, 18ESO3, 19ESO2, 19ESO3, 20ESO2, 20ESO3, 21ESO2, 21ESO3, 21ESO4, 22ESO2, 22ESO3, 23ESO2, 23ESO4, 24ESO2, 25ESO2, 25ESO3, 25ESO4, 26ESO2, 26ESO3, 27ESO2, 27ESO3, 28ESO2, 29ESO2 and 30ESO2.</p> <p>Vegetation Protection Overlay maps:</p> <p>1VPO2, 2VPO2, 3VPO2, 4VPO2, 5VPO1, 6VPO1, 9VPO2, 11VPO1, 12VPO2, 14VPO1, 14VPO2, 15VPO1, 15VPO2, 16VPO1, 16VPO2, 19VPO1, 19VPO2, 20VPO1, 21VPO1, 21VPO2, 22VPO2, 25VPO1, 25VPO2, 26VPO1, 26VPO2, 27VPO1, 27VPO2, 28VPO2, and 30VPO1.</p> <p>Significant Landscape Overlay maps:</p> <p>1SLO1, 2SLO1, 5SLO1, 8SLO1, 9SLO1, 11SLO1, 15SLO1, 16SLO1, 18SLO1, 19SLO1, 23SLO2, 24SLO2, 25SLO1, 26SLO1 and</p>

28SLO2.

Heritage Overlay maps:

2HO, 3HO, 4HO, 5HO, 9HO, 10HO 11HO,
12HO 13HO, 15HO, 20HO, 21HO and 26HO.

Design and Development Overlay maps:

5DDO, 9DDO, 11DDDO 23DDO4, 24DDO4
and 28DDO4.

Neighbourhood Character Overlay maps:

23NCO1, 24NCO1 and 28NCO1.

Development Plan Overlay maps:

9DPO.

Erosion Management Overlay maps:

9EMO1, 11EMO1, 12EMO1, 13EMO1,
14EMO1, 15EMO1, 16EMO1, 17EMO1,
18EMO1, 19EMO1, 20EMO1, 21EMO1,
22EMO1, 23EMO1, 24EMO1, 25EMO1,
26EMO1, 27EMO1, 28EMO1, 29EMO1 and
30EMO1.

Land Subject to Inundation Overlay maps:

1 to 6LSIO, 9 to 21LSIO and 23 to 30LSIO.

Wildfire Management Overlay maps:

1WMO, 2WMO, 4WMO, 5WMO, 9WMO, 11 to
30WMO.

Public Acquisition Overlay maps:

5PAO, 6PAO, 9PAO, 11PAO, 12PAO and
16PAO.

Airport Environs Overlay maps:

9AEO, 27AEO, 29AEO and 30AEO.

Date this scheme began

5 August 1999

COLAC OTWAY PLANNING SCHEME

AMENDMENT CXX

EXPLANATORY REPORT

Who is the planning authority?

The Shire of Colac Otway has prepared Amendment CXX to the Colac Otway Planning Scheme, and is the planning authority for this amendment.

Land affected by the amendment.

The amendment affects all land within the Township zone in the townships of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek.

What the amendment does.

The Shire of Colac Otway adopted the Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study, including the Precinct brochures in September 2005. The amendment seeks to implement the recommendations of the Neighbourhood Character Study.

The amendment comprises of the following:

Local Planning Policy Framework

- Updates MSS Clause 21.02 to refer to the need to protect the distinctive landscape of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek.
- Updates MSS Clause 21.04-13 by the inclusion of township visions and preferred character statements for the Character Precincts within the townships of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek
- Updates Local Policy 22.05 to delete reference to Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek.

Overlays

- Introduces Schedule 2 to the Significant Landscape Overlay (SLO2) that applies to Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek. The schedule requires a permit for removal of trees over a certain circumference.
- Introduces the Victorian Planning Provision for Neighbourhood Character Overlay into the Scheme and applies Schedule 1 to the Neighbourhood Character Overlay (NCO1) to Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek. The schedule introduces new standards for Clauses 54, 55 and 56 of the planning scheme for:
 - Street setback
 - Building height
 - Site coverage
 - Significant trees/Landscaping (including total hard surface coverage)
 - Side and rear setbacks
 - Walls on boundaries
 - Design detail
 - Front fence height
- Introduces Schedule 4 to the Design and Development Overlay (DDO4) that applies to Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek. The Overlay sets minimum lot sizes for subdivision and requires a permit for fences other than post and wire style under 1.2 metres. The minimum lots sizes are summarised in the table below.

Precinct	Minimum lot size (sq.m.)	Average lot size if 4 or more than 4 lots created (sq.m.)
Wye River 1	800	900
Wye River 2	800	1000
Kennett River 1	600	700
Kennett River 2	900	1100
Separation Creek 1	600	800
Skenes Creek 1	900	1300
Skenes Creek 2	600	700

Particular Provisions

- Amends the Schedule to Clause 61 to update the list of maps forming part of the Scheme.

Strategic assessment of the amendment

Why is the amendment required?

The amendment is required to put into effect the findings and recommendations of the Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study 2005. The Study identified, with community input, neighbourhood character visions for each of the townships and preferred character statements and design guidelines for each of the Precincts within the townships. The Study recommended a number of changes to the planning scheme to provide statutory guidance to decision making within the townships.

How does the amendment implement the objectives of planning in Victoria?

The objectives of planning in Victoria in the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* include:
 “To conserve and enhance those.....areas of scientific, aesthetic ..and cultural value.” and
 “To provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources.....”

The amendment helps to implement objectives of planning in Victoria by assisting to protecting the natural resources of the Otway coast, in particular the significant landscapes identified in the Great Ocean Road Region Strategy 2004, within which the townships sit. In addition the amendment includes controls over tree removal and encourages indigenous replanting.

How does the amendment address the environmental effects and any relevant social and economic effects?

The amendment will assist in the improvement of environment of the townships by increasing the retention of vegetation and encouraging the planting of vegetation. The amendment will require buildings to be set back from boundaries and minimise site coverage to enable the retention and planting of trees and other vegetation to retain and enhance the valued aspects of the neighbourhood character. This may also assist in reducing erosion and runoff and increasing soil stability.

The amendment proposes minimum lot sizes that will limit the future potential growth of the townships. The townships are not identified as localities for growth in The Great Ocean Road Region Strategy 2004. The economic growth and prosperity of the coastal region is dependent at least partly upon tourism and visitor spending. The retention of the special landscape character of the Great Ocean Road coast and the townships that sit within the landscape, is of vital importance to the economic health of the region.

The social and economic effects will be positive in retaining and enhancing the valued characteristics of the townships to provide a pleasant and attractive living environment and tourist attractor.

Does the amendment comply with the requirements of any Minister's Direction applicable to the amendment?

The Amendment is not affected by any of the Minister's Directions under Section 12 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

The Amendment is consistent with the Ministerial Direction on the Form and Content of Planning Schemes under Section 7 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.

How does the amendment support or implement the State Planning Policy Framework?

The SSPF identifies principles of land use and development planning that have been supported and implemented by this amendment. These include:

Clause 14.01 Planning for urban settlement – The amendment aims to facilitate the orderly development of urban areas. The Great Ocean Road Region Strategy recognises the limited growth opportunities within coastal townships of Colac Otway other than Apollo Bay. The future growth potential of the townships is limited by the minimum lot sizes proposed in the amendment, and it is possible that the towns will reach capacity within the existing residentially zoned land within 10 years. However the environmental constraints of the townships including land slip, slope, vegetation retention and wildfire risk have been recognised for some time, and therefore the limitations are already present.

Clause 15.09 Conservation of native flora and fauna – The amendment aims to provide for the protection and conservation of biodiversity, including native vegetation retention through the application of the Significant Landscape Overlay.

Clause 15.12 Energy efficiency – The amendment encourages retention of existing vegetation.

Clause 16.01 Residential development for single dwellings – The amendment aims to encourage residential development for single dwellings that respects the current pattern of development and preferred neighbourhood character. Minimum lot sizes, set back standards and maximum site coverage will ensure that dwellings are well spaced and reflect the lower density development of the townships.

The townships are highly exposed to wildfire as recognised by the application of the Wildfire Management Overlay in many parts of the townships. It is of relevance to the State policy that future development is encouraged in areas with low vulnerability to fire. The amendment proposes to limit the further intensification of development in the townships which minimises future exposure of dwellings to wildfire danger.

Clause 16.02 Medium density housing – The amendment aims to encourage development of well-designed housing that respects the neighbourhood character of the area. Varied ResCode standards that relate to the achievement of the preferred character of the townships are introduced by the amendment. There are currently few opportunities for medium density housing in the townships due to existing controls and topographical and infrastructure issues.

Minimum lot sizes of between 600 sq.m. and up to an average of 1300 sq.m. are proposed, providing for a variety of housing types. Lot sizes do not necessarily reflect the form of development, therefore many forms of development could be constructed on lots. All proposals will be considered in the context of the neighbourhood character townships visions and preferred neighbourhood character.

Clause 19.03 Design and built form – The amendment aims to achieve architectural and urban design outcomes that contribute positively to the local neighbourhood character of the townships. The amendment introduces varied ResCode standards for the matters previously outlined, that set built form (height and setback) standards and design standards (detailed design, fence height, landscaping) that will ensure new development respects the key characteristics of the townships, and in particular the vegetated landscape setting. The township visions and preferred character statements to be included within the MSS state the intended outcome of the controls and provide the ultimate measure of the achievement of development that respects and enhances the special qualities of the townships.

How does the amendment support or implement the Local Planning Policy Framework?

Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS)

The amendment has been prepared to align with Council's MSS.

The MSS provides an environmental, social and economic profile of the Colac Otway Shire and describes the state and regional context of the Shire, including the coastal environs. It details objectives and strategies for, among others:

- The coast and environs: to protect visual, environmental and cultural features of the coast and environs which give the Otway Coast its character while facilitating development in an environmentally sensitive way and providing greater residential choice.
- Limiting expansion of coastal settlements (other than Apollo Bay) in accordance with environmental constraints.

Clause 21.04-02 under 'The coast and its environs' contains the following

"Key objective

- To protect those key visual, environmental and cultural features which give the Otway Coast its character whilst facilitating a range of developments in an environmentally sensitive way to provide greater residential choice and assist in diversifying the economic base of the Shire."

Strategies to achieve the objective are:

- "Promote a pattern of settlements in the coastal strip that recognises a balance between opportunity for growth and retention of environmental and cultural qualities." And
- "Recognise and protect key environmental and cultural features."

The strategic direction for the development of Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Separation Creek and Wye River is outlined in Clause 21.04-13 Smaller Communities of the Shire. The Clause contains the following objectives and strategies:

"Key Objective

- To provide an attractive, safe, residential environment and strengthen the economic future of the small communities in the Shire.

Strategies to achieve the objective:

- Maintain and enhance the environmental qualities of small towns.

Implementation will be achieved by:

- Encouraging the development of high quality design input to development in small communities.
- Identifying and promote key features of local communities that highlight their identity.
- Restricting the expansion of communities in areas of landslip and high fire risk.
- Encouraging the implementation of landscape features that recognise indigenous flora and fauna."

The amendment accords with the achievement of the MSS by protecting key characteristics of the townships that contribute to the significant landscape of the Otway coast, while allowing development that respond to those characteristics. The amendment recognises the limited potential for growth of the settlements by proposing minimum lot sizes, maximum site coverage and height limits. High quality design is encouraged by a range of varied ResCode standards and design guidelines.

Local Policies

The Main Roads and Scenic Routes Policy

The Policy applies to two roads in or near the townships, the Great Ocean Road and the Skenes Creek Road. The Policy reflects the Council's desire to protect the amenity, heritage and landscape values of scenic routes to and enhance the Shire's tourism attractiveness. Among other things, the policy aims to ensure a high level of visual amenity is achieved by blending development into the environs. The policy states that the following factors should be taken into account in assessing applications for use or development along these roads:

- Buildings and works (including special setback provisions for the Great Ocean Road)
- Building materials (including a non-mandatory 8 metre height maximum)
- Landscaping

The amendment is consistent with the desire to maintain the character, landscape and heritage values of the two routes, and acknowledges the importance of the Great Ocean Road. The amendment recognises

the contribution that the location of buildings and works, building materials and landscaping make to the character of the coastal towns, and therefore their contribution to the scenic routes

Ridgelines

This Policy applies to all land located on and adjacent to prominent ridgelines. The objective of the policy is to ensure that all development is contained within visual corridors between prominent ridgelines to preserve the visual environment.

The Policy includes matters to be taken into account in considering development on or near ridgelines including:

- Buildings should not form a silhouette, the slope of the roof, external building materials
- Landscaping should be provide to assist in blending development into the landscape, be native species, mixture of heights of vegetation, reinstatement of removed vegetation and completion of landscaping within 12 months of development

The amendment supports the intention of this local policy, and provides additional detail and decision making tools.

Coastal and Otway Ranges Townships Policy

This Policy applies to all land located within Skenes Creek, Wye River, Separation Creek and Kennett River. The policy aims to build on the MSS, which identifies the importance of protecting the character of the Otway Coast townships. It details a number of matters to be taken into account when considering applications to use and develop land within the townships, including:

- Design of buildings
- Building height
- Site coverage
- Roof form
- External building appearance
- Landscaping

In relation to building height, the policy states that new development of more than 2 storeys or 8 metres in height will be discouraged, along with building site coverage of more than 50%.

The amendment reaffirms the appropriate building height for these townships, the design and built form guidelines and refines the site coverage maximums for each township.

Does the amendment make proper use of the Victoria Planning Provisions?

It is considered that the amendment makes proper use of the Victorian Planning Provisions. Preparation of the amendment has had regard for the various statutory implementation tools available through the VPP. The VPP Practice Note "Using the Neighbourhood Character provisions" has been complied with in selecting the proposed tools. The Neighbourhood Character Overlay has been used to vary ResCode standards that achieve the neighbourhood character objectives. The DDO has been used to control subdivision and introduce minimum lot sizes that will ensure that the landscape character is retained, and to introduce fence controls. The SLO has been used to ensure that proper consideration of neighbourhood and landscape character issues is enabled in the determination of applications for removal of vegetation.

How does the amendment address the views of any relevant agency?

The impact of the proposed amendment upon the wildfire management of the townships will be discussed with the fire authorities. However the minimum lot sizes proposed have been in part designed to ensure that each site has the capacity to reduce fire hazard to individual buildings while still providing sufficient space on site to retain and plant vegetation hat will screen buildings from view and retain the vegetated environment.

What impact will the new planning provisions have on the resource and administrative costs of the responsible authority?

The amendment will incur minimal increased resource and administrative costs for the Council as it does not require additional planning permit applications.

The amendment will have a positive effect on the resources and administration costs of the Responsible Authority. The implementation of the findings and recommendations of the Skenes Creek, Kennett River, Wye River and Separation Creek Neighbourhood Character Study, 2005 will provide a clear

framework for the protection of the highly valued distinctive landscape qualities of the townships. The amendment will provide a decision guidelines that enable the responsible authority to make consistent and transparent decisions, and for applicants to understand the considerations of the responsible authority. The amendment will facilitate developments that will aim to achieve the visions identified for townships and the preferred character of Precincts within the townships.

Where you may inspect this Amendment.

The amendment is available for public inspection, free of charge, during office hours at the following places.

Department of Sustainability and
Environment
Planning Information Centre
Ground Floor
8 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne 3002

Department of Sustainability and
Environment
South West Regional Office
180 Flyans Street
South Geelong 3220

Colac Otway Shire
Colac Services Centre
2 - 6 Rae Street
Colac 3250

Apollo Bay Service Centre
69 – 71 Nelson Street
Apollo Bay 3233



